

Saipan Tribune

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INSIDE



Snapshots of a Tragedy

The twisted limbs of the frail-bodied girl were caught in a garden fence near the sea. She may have died, but no one stopped—there was already too much tragedy around her to check.

Page 15



Yushchenko Claims Win

Opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko declared victory Monday in Ukraine's fiercely contested presidential election, telling thousands of supporters they had taken their country to a new political era.

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More than 20,000 killed



A street is littered with damaged vehicles and debris after the area was hit by tidal waves at Patong beach in Phuket, Thailand, Sunday December 26, 2004.

By DILIP GANGULY
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

Legions of rescuers spread across Asia Monday after an earthquake of epic power struck deep beneath the Indian Ocean, unleashing 20-foot tidal waves that ravaged coasts across thousands of miles,

killed more than 20,000 people and left millions homeless in the fourth-largest temblor in a century.

The death toll in eight nations in southern Asia—and as far west as Somalia, on the African coast, where nine people were reported lost—steadily increased as authorities sorted out a far-flung disaster caused by Sunday's 9.0-magnitude

earthquake, strongest in 40 years.

Worst-hit Sri Lanka and Indonesia had at least a million people each driven from their homes. Warships in Thailand steamed to tropical island resorts to search for survivors as helicopters in India rushed medicine to stricken areas and troops in Sri Lanka dealt with small-

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Saipan's Thai community in collective shock

By MARCONI CALINDAS
REPORTER

Thai national Pani, who works as a housekeeper at a local hotel on Saipan, has been frantic since learning of the tragedy that has hit Thailand and other parts of South and Southeast Asia. Her family manages a small barbecue and food business along the shores of Phuket beach in Thailand—one of the worst hit sites by killer tsunamis that have already claimed more than 20,000 lives.

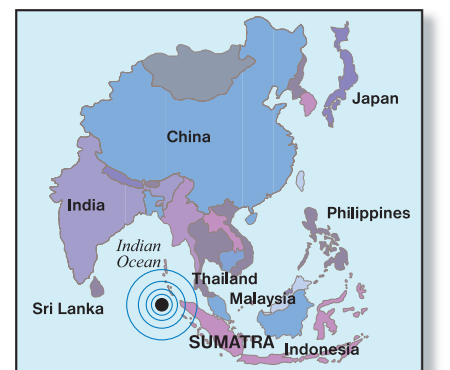
Pani, who has been working here on Saipan for 15 years now, has yet to hear from her family. She said she couldn't sleep and she couldn't help but worry about them while watching the swath of devastation that has hit Asia, including Thailand.

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JAYVEE VALLEJERA

From left, Thai nationals Saiyan Danroraung, Pratheep Lekmek, Rungphet Kiangkrathok and Thitiporn Itisaia hold their breath as they watch the news of the tsunamis that hit South and Southeast Asia, including Thailand, Sunday morning.



Chain reaction began beneath Indian Ocean

By BETH GARDINER
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

LONDON (AP)—The chain reaction that sent enormous, deadly tidal waves crashing into the coasts of Asia and Africa on Sunday started more than 10 kilometers (six miles) beneath the ocean floor off the tip of the Indonesian island of Sumatra.


Geologic plates pressing against each other

See CHAIN on Page 12

Local



VERIZON
CMYK



The Saipan Tribune accepts unsolicited pictures of birthdays, weddings, baptisms, and other community and family events for free publication. Material submitted should be original and not copyrighted, in digital or print format. Must include a caption containing complete details (a description of the event, identities of the persons in the picture, the date, and the place), the name of the contributor, and a contact number. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to edit the caption, the date of publication and the size of the picture. Contributors can e-mail their submissions to editor@saipantribune.com. To check if contributions are received, call 213-6287, 213-3448, or 213-8743.

MPLA compelled to issue land payment today

By **LIBERTY DONES**
REPORTER

Breaking what he terms as an impasse in land compensation, Gov. Juan N. Babauta managed yesterday to compel the Marianas Public Lands Authority board to do everything possible to get land payment checks to claimants by today. *(See related story on page 5)*

“I asked the MPLA board to resolve it today so that land compensation checks can be processed and be out either today or tomorrow,” the governor said.

“This has been due 30 to 40 years ago. You’d understand the urgency if you’re the one talking with the claimants,” he added, indicating that the government has simply run out of alibis to pacify landowners this time.

At issue is the questionable appointment of MPLA commissioner Ed Guerrero in view of a pending litigation filed by former commissioner Henry S. Hofschneider, who was unilaterally terminated from his post by board chair Ana Demapan-Castro.

This, the administration said, prevents the processing and issuance of compensation to claimants.

The administration said there are at least five requisitions, including the \$3.4 million compensation to the Malite estate, that are being held up due to the issue.

These requisition documents require the signature of the MPLA commissioner,

the Commonwealth Development Authority and the Department of Finance.

Addressing the MPLA board by phone from his office during the board’s meeting yesterday on Rota, Babauta lobbied that the MPLA resolve the issue.

“I ask the board to resolve it today,” said the governor.

Demapan-Castro, however, said that Guerrero’s confirmation and board’s sanctioning of Hofschneider’s termination have yet to be tackled on Wednesday at 11am. Yet the governor insisted that the matter be addressed by the board yesterday.

“Sounds like it’s something that would obviously meet the Open Government Act requirement but we are still faced with the urgency of issuing the checks either by the end of working day today or tomorrow,” said the governor.

He said that appointing Guerrero as acting commissioner would not affect the pending litigation.

Meantime, Demapan-Castro informed the governor that the board would issue a resolution addressing the issue.

The board chair said the resolution would be signed by all board members affirming her earlier decision to terminate Hofschneider.

Babauta, joined by attorney general Pamela Brown and CDA executive director Mary Lou Ada, pushed that Demapan-Castro be designated as acting commissioner, an approach that was rejected by the agency.

Consulting with MPLA legal counsel Alan Lane, Demapan-Castro said she could concur but she could not possibly sign as acting commissioner.

Lane cited that the MPLA board could just approve it since it has the ultimate authority on the land compensation.

Brown said having the board’s signature would be questioned by the trustee, which is the Bank of Guam. After a while, the board chair asked if the board could just appoint deputy commissioner Frank Eliptico as the acting chairman. Babauta and Brown agreed to this.

“Yes, that’s possible,” they said.

The board then formally approved to appoint Eliptico

as the acting commissioner who would sign the pending requisitions.

As such, this would require Guerrero, who was at yesterday’s board meeting, to go off-island today to satisfy the appointment of Eliptico as acting commissioner.

In a separate interview, Eliptico said he would be the acting commissioner effective today.

“The board wants to ensure that land compensation be processed and disbursed in the most efficient and expeditious manner. The board members are cognizant that a lot of people are in need of this money,” said Eliptico.

In a letter sent to MPLA board members yesterday, Babauta

said “to continue with the status quo resulting in lengthy delays of land compensation to deserving recipients is a breach of public trust.”

“It can’t go on.... The only victims in this impasse are our people and this is not acceptable,” he said.

Meantime, Ada said that, of the \$28 million land compensation bond money, \$25 million remains to be disbursed.

Babauta said this amount must be disbursed within 2005 or the government would be slapped with interests.

Excluding the Malite estate, which is under litigation, Finance Secretary Fermin Atalig said that the pending requisitions amount to almost \$200,000.

The administration declined to reveal the names of the claimants in the pending list.

PHI

MPLA exec says AGO manipulating Finance

By **JOHN RAVELO**
REPORTER

Marianas Public Lands Authority commissioner Edward DeLeon Guerrero accused the Attorney General’s Office of manipulating the Department of Finance to freeze land compensation claims endorsed by him.

“The Department of Finance is withholding subsequent land compensation requisitions based on the unfounded fear of the Office of the Attorney General over commissioner DeLeon Guerrero’s authority,” the commissioner’s attorney, Ramon Quichocho said.

“Ostensibly, the Department of Finance has been manipulated by the Office of the Attorney General to hold hostage land compensation requisitions bearing the signature of commissioner DeLeon Guerrero,” he said.

The accusation forms part of Guerrero’s submission to the Superior Court Friday, which asked for the dismissal of the complaint initiated by attorney

general Pamela Brown to stop the release of some \$3.45 million in land compensation claim by the Malite estate.

Quichocho made a separate submission besides joining the MPLA and its board in asking for the dismissal, saying that his client was improperly included in the lawsuit.

Brown had also sued the Commonwealth Development Authority and Malite estate administrator Jesus Tudela. The suit, however, did not name the Finance Department as co-defendant.

Quichocho said the suit should be dismissed partly because of the failure by the AGO to include the Finance Department as defendant. He said the Finance Department is the constitutional entity that has authority to control and regulate public funds—not the AGO.

Quichocho also said that the commissioner should be excluded from the suit because only the MPLA board has the power to sue and be sued. He

See MPLA on Page 4

PIC NEW YEAR
CMYK

COMMUNITY Briefs

Resumption of classes at KagES

Reminder to all Kagman Elementary School students/parents/guardians: Classes will resume on Jan. 11, 2005 after the holiday break.

Resumption of classes at Hopwood

Reminder to all Hopwood Junior High School students/parents/guardians: School resumes on Jan. 11, 2005 after the holiday break.

Victim Hotline seeks volunteers

Do you want to make a difference? Do you want to help out our community? Are you interested in helping victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault?

If you answer yes to any of the above questions, then you may qualify to become a Victim Hotline Volunteer. The Victim Hotline is a 24-hour telecommunication crisis intervention center, which provides access to information, referral, and a listening ear to victims of crime here in the CNMI.

The hotline will train the right people to answer crisis phone in the comfort of their homes in the evenings and weekends.

There will be a volunteer training on Saturday, Jan. 8, 2005 at the Hyatt Regency Saipan Hotel from 8:30am to 2pm. The training is free but those interested must contact Velma Del Rosario at 234-5100 to sign up. Registration deadline is Jan. 6, 2005.

Chamorro/Carolinian languages survey

The Chamorro/Carolinian Language Policy Commission is now conducting a community language survey on the indigenous Chamorro and Carolinian

languages used at home and in the community.

The survey will be conducted on the islands of Saipan, Tinian, Rota, and the Northern Islands.

The commission is asking the community's cooperation in the survey. They are requested to accommodate the persons tasked to conduct the study as well as answer their questions as honestly as possible.

The Chamorro/Carolinian Language Policy Commission is under the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs.

For more information, call the language commission's office at 288-5321/26/27.

2004 W-2CM forms distribution ongoing

The Division of Revenue and Taxation wishes to inform all CNMI employers that the distribution of the 2004 W-2CM forms and Instructions has started and is now ongoing.

All businesses and employers are asked, to pick up forms during the regular business hours, from 8am to 4pm at the office of the Division of Revenue and Taxation located at the Dandan Commercial Center. The deadline for filing 2004 W-2CM form is Feb. 28, 2005 at 4:30pm.

Public notice to first time homeowners

The Northern Marianas Housing Corp. said that it is extending the deadline for first-time homeowners to submit housing loan applications for the Plumeria Estates.

NMHC encourages all interested applicants to pick up an application at its central office in Garapan, Monday through Friday from 7:30am to 4:30pm, except holidays, and to have the applications submitted as soon as they can. For any inquiries on the matter, call one of NMHC's loan officers at 234-9447/7689/7670.

the MPLA, reportedly with the consent of the CDA, announced that they would go ahead with the release of the land compensation to the Malite estate on Dec. 6 despite her objections.

She questioned the amount of compensation and its release, contending that the claim was spurious. The MPLA board approved the land compensation claim, a matter that was already decided by the Trust Territory court in 1978.

That court determined the compensation for condemnation of a parcel of land, which now forms part of Saipan's Marianas High School, in the amount of \$3,682. The Commonwealth government obtained title to the land as a result of the condemnation. The Malite heirs, however, claimed that they did not receive any payment from the government regarding the land taking.

MPLA

From Page 3

also argued that Brown failed to exhaust administrative remedies by failing to appeal the MPLA's determination before its board, in connection with the land compensation claim by the Malite estate.

The MPLA, its board, and commissioner had jointly asked the court to dismiss the lawsuit, saying that Brown is not the lawful attorney general who has the constitutional authority to prosecute violations of Commonwealth law.

They contend that the CNMI has no lawful attorney general since Sept. 15, 2003, asserting that Brown's nomination by the government failed to get Senate confirmation within the 90-day statutory deadline.

Brown filed the lawsuit after

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 7, 2004

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
Saipan-Saipan				Saipan-Saipan			
CO 900	8:00am	8:45pm	1,3	CO 901	7:00pm	7:55pm	1,3,4,5,7
CO 902	8:15am	8:55am	4,7	CO 901	7:00pm	8:45am	2
CO 903	8:30am	9:10am	2,6	CO 902	8:00pm	8:50pm	1,4,5,7
CO 904	8:45am	9:25am	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 903	8:15pm	9:15pm	Daily
CO 905	9:00am	1:00pm	8	CO 904	8:40pm	1:00pm	1,5,7
CO 906	10:00pm	11:00pm	1,4,7	CO 904	8:40pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO 906	8:00pm	8:00pm	Daily	CO 905	4:00pm	8:00pm	1,6
CO 909	2:00pm	6:00pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 906	4:00pm	8:00pm	3,6
CO 908	8:20pm	8:20pm	Daily	CO 906	4:30pm	8:20pm	2,4,7
CO 908	8:20pm	8:40pm	1,3,4,5,7	CO 908	7:00pm	8:00pm	Daily
W 9036	7:40pm	8:00pm	Daily-4,5,6,7	W 9032	8:40pm	8:40pm	Daily
W 9038	8:10pm	8:30pm	Daily-4,5,6,7	W 9033	8:00pm	7:00pm	Daily-4,5,6,7
Saipan-Manila				Manila-Saipan			
CO 909	8:20pm	8:20pm	1,4,7	CO 910	10:40pm	4:25pm+1	2,4,7
Saipan-Magapan				Magapan-Saipan			
W 079	8:00pm	11:00pm	Daily	W 077	8:00pm	1:00pm+1	Daily
Saipan-Shanghai				Shanghai-Saipan			
U 608	6:00pm	7:00pm	3,6	W 087	8:00pm	2:40pm+1	2,6
Saipan-Suwannee				Suwannee-Saipan			
W 2026	8:30am	8:40pm	2,6	W 2027	8:00pm	2:10pm+1	1,6
Saipan-Talpa				Talpa-Saipan			
W 078	8:30am	1:00pm	Daily	JAL 607	8am	2:20pm	Daily
W 048	8:30pm	8:30pm	Daily	W 078	8:30pm	3:00pm	Daily
W 076	8:30pm	7:30pm	Daily	W 077	8:45pm	0:00pm+1	Daily
Saipan-Corral				Corral-Saipan			
U 540	8:00am	8:00am	Daily	JAL 606	10:00pm	2:25pm+1	Daily
Saipan-Corral				Corral-Saipan			
W 204	8:40pm	8:30pm	Daily	W 203	8:30pm	1:40pm+1	Daily
Saipan-Hong Kong				Hong Kong-Saipan			
U 609	8:20pm	8:20pm	1,6	CO 910	10:00pm	4:45pm+1	1,6
Saipan-Rota				Rota-Saipan			
W 3036	7:40pm	8:10pm	Daily	W 3030	8:00pm	8:30pm	Daily
CO 908	8:15am	8:45am	Daily	CO 908	8:15am	8:45am	Daily
W 3037	10:00pm	10:00pm	Daily	W 3033	1:00pm	2:00pm	Daily
CO 908	2:00pm	2:30pm	Daily	CO 904	8:00pm	7:20pm	Daily
W 3033	8:10pm	8:40pm	Daily	W 3038	7:00pm	7:30pm	Daily
Saipan-Taipei				Taipei-Saipan			
U 601	8:00pm	8:00pm	3,6	CO 922	10:00pm	4:10pm+1	3,6
Saipan-Tsukuba				Tsukuba-Saipan			
U 104	8:40pm	8:40pm	Daily	ZU 103	7:00pm	7:10pm	Daily
U 106	7:40am	7:40am	Daily	ZU 104	7:00pm	8am	Daily
U 105	8am	8:10pm	Daily	ZU 105	8:20pm	8:30pm	Daily
U 107	8:40pm	8:30pm	Daily	ZU 106	8am	8:10am	Daily
U 108	8:10pm	8:20pm	Daily	ZU 109	8am	10:10am	Daily
U 111	10:40pm	10:50pm	Daily	ZU 112	11:00pm	11:10pm	Daily
U 118	11:00pm	11:10pm	Daily	ZU 104	10pm	12:10pm	Daily
U 115	1pm	1:10pm	Daily	ZU 109	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
U 117	2pm	2:40pm	Daily	ZU 116	2:00pm	2pm	Daily
U 118	4pm	4:10pm	Daily	ZU 120	4:00pm	4:00pm	Daily
W 3036	6:00pm	6:40pm	6,7	ZU 122	8pm	8:10pm	Daily
U 121	6:40pm	6:30pm	Daily	ZU 124	8:00pm	8:10pm	Daily
U 128	8:10pm	8:00pm	Daily	ZU 126	8:20pm	8:30pm	Daily
U 128	8pm	8:10pm	Daily	W 3034	7:40pm	7:57pm	6,6,6
W 3037	8pm	8:10pm	Real Fl. 6				
Saipan-Manila				Manila-Saipan			
W 3036	8:00pm	10:00pm	Daily	CO 910	8:20pm	7:00pm	2,6
CO 908	10:00pm	10:40pm		CO 941	8:20pm	7:00pm	1,2,4,7
W 3031	10:30pm	1:00pm	Daily	W 3038	7:00pm	8:10pm	1,3,4,7
CO 903	2:40 pm	3:30 pm		W 3030	7:40pm	8:10pm	2,6
W 3038	8pm	8:30pm	Daily	W 3030	8:10pm	8:20pm	Daily
W 3038	7:00pm	7:00pm	5	CO 908	8:40pm	8:40pm	
CO 908	7:10 pm	7:40 pm		W 3030	10:00am	10:30am	Daily
W 3037	8:00pm	8:10pm	8	W 3037	10:00am	10:30am	Daily
Saipan-Corral				Corral-Saipan			
W 3036	8pm	8:40pm	6,7	CO 901	1:00pm	2:10 pm	
W 3037	8:30pm	8:10pm	8	W 3038	8:40pm	8:10pm	Daily
				CO 903	8:00pm	8:40pm	
Saipan-Manila				Manila-Saipan			
W 3036	8pm	8:40pm	6,7	W 3038	8:00pm	8:10pm	1 stop in GMA 8
W 3037	8:30pm	8:10pm	8				

Editor's Note: Depart: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental Airlines; W: Northwest Airlines; JAL: Japan Airlines; CZ: China Airlines; PM and ZU: Pacific International Airlines; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Times is not responsible for any changes in the schedule(s).

Threats issued to get MPLA moving on land payments

By **LIBERTY DONES**
REPORTER

Had the Marianas Public Lands Authority board of directors failed yesterday to agree to fix issues preventing prompt land payments, the governor would not leave for China and he would move to abolish the MPLA board altogether.

“It [China trip] depends on whether we resolve it today. We could always re-schedule [the China trip] but this land payment has been long overdue. This must be done now,” said the governor prior to his open teleconference with MPLA board members who were meeting on Rota yesterday afternoon.

At the same time, Babauta said his office was ready to implement “Plan B” had MPLA remained with the status quo of delayed land payments. Plan B refers to the abolition of the board, which has lately been controversial over various is-

sues, including a power struggle among its members.

The governor, however, successfully lobbied the MPLA yesterday “to cure the impasse” on land compensation.

Press secretary Pete Callaghan said that the CNMI delegation will be leaving today for Beijing for the signing of the Approved Destination Status with the Chinese government.

Based on the itinerary, the delegation led by Gov. Juan N. Babauta would stop by Seoul, Korea, today to get their Chinese visas and proceed to Beijing tomorrow.

The ADS signing is scheduled to take place on Dec. 30.

As of yesterday, the following individuals have also confirmed their attendance to the trip: attorney general Pam Brown, governor special consultant Adam Turner, Callaghan, Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Vicki Benavente, MVA board chair David Sablan, Tinian

Dynasty Hotel and Casino chair Michael Kwan, TDHC general manager Tom Liu, Strategic Economic Development Council president Marian Aldan-Pierce, and Century Tours and Travel executive Sonny Tan.

Callaghan said that both Senate President Joaquin Adriano and House Speaker Benigno Fitial were invited but they did not confirm attendance.

House leadership spokesman Charles Reyes said Fitial chose not to join the delegation amid reports that it was not certain whether the ADS would actually be signed this week.

“The Speaker won’t go unless there’s certainty that it would be signed,” said Reyes.

The governor acknowledged that the China ADS signing had been rescheduled for the fourth time already this year.

The land compensation process has been stalled amid questions over the appointment of MPLA commissioner Ed Guerrero, who

took over Henry Hofschneider’s post soon after Hofschneider was terminated by MPLA board chair Anna Demapan-Castro. Hofschneider had questioned his termination and the issue is now before the courts.

With the matter still awaiting resolution, Guerrero’s endorsements of the land compensation requisitions were not acceptable to the fund trustee, the Bank of Guam.

During yesterday’s telecon-

ference, the chair assured the governor that MPLA deputy commissioner Frank Eliptico would be tasked as acting commissioner today to sign the requisition documents.

To do this, the board would allow Guerrero to go off-island.

To end the stalemate, the governor urged the board yesterday to issue a public notice to resolve the termination of Hofschneider and ratify the appointment of Guerrero.

As an alternative, the governor also asked the board to publicly appoint Guerrero as acting commissioner or designate the board chair to the position to effect the land compensation without jeopardizing the pending litigation.

The board decided yesterday to make Eliptico the acting commissioner and scheduled a meeting tomorrow morning to formalize the termination of Hofschneider and the appointment of Guerrero.



AGNES E. DONATO

A worker stands at the foot of the “illegal landfill” allegedly created by Musung Corp. at a construction site in Koblerville. Shown at the left are the broken concrete, rebars, and debris that the company had to dig up yesterday after improperly burying them in the ground last Friday.

Firm allegedly creates illegal landfill

By **AGNES E. DONATO**
REPORTER

A construction company was caught creating an illegal landfill at its jobsite in a Koblerville residential area.

A visit to the site showed that Musung Corp. had dug a trench measuring about 20 feet long, 5 feet wide, and 4 feet deep, and dumped debris from an old structure into the hole, in violation of CNMI environmental laws.

Koblerville resident Cinta Kaipat, who lives next to the construction site, said Musung recently started demolishing a burnt-out house and garage at the place. The company was initially observed getting rid of debris by utilizing a dump truck, she said.

Last Friday, however, witnesses found workers digging a deep long trench and burying tins, rebars, and broken concrete on the ground.

“[We] couldn’t believe [our] eyes when [we] saw the back hoe compacting the debris into the trench and filing it up. The

company decided to create their own landfill,” Kaipat said.

She added that the trench was created on government property located just outside the edge of the private property. The private lot belongs to Koblerville residents Joaquin Delos Santos and Maria Celis, who recently leased the property to a Korean business interest.

A heavy equipment operator hired by Musung to demolish the structure and dispose of the debris, said the incident was a result of “a misunderstanding.”

The worker, who refused to give his name, said that, although he was originally working on the debris disposal, he had to delegate the job to a co-worker who apparently misunderstood his instructions and dug the trench.

The worker was found yesterday digging up the debris and placing them on a dump truck for delivery to the Marpi sanitary landfill.

Musung made the move following a visit by representatives of the Emergency Management Office and the Division

of Environmental Quality.

Neither DEQ director John Castro nor environmental specialist Marvin Seman, who surveyed the site, could be reached for statement yesterday on whether or not Musung would be penalized for its violation, in view of the company’s efforts to correct the problem.

Kaipat, however, maintained that Musung should not be allowed to go scot-free.

“Musung’s president [Young Chul Lee] was here last Friday when this was going on. And he didn’t do anything to stop it. Besides, I don’t think the back hoe operator would just go in and dig up a trench if he was not instructed,” Kaipat said.

She also urged DEQ to look at the history of the construction company to see if it committed similar violations in the past.

“I hope this whole thing will not just end with a slap on the wrist. DEQ should go further than just making Musung clean it up. It is every investor’s obligation to know the law and to follow them,” she added.

CARS UNLIMITED

CARWASH

TRIPLE J
CMYK

SHELL STOCKING

House to look into Tottotville housing problem

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

The House of Representatives is poised to hold an investigation into the alleged defects and deficiencies of the Tottotville housing units in the wake of complaints by subdivision homeowners.

Vice Speaker Timothy Villagomez, in a letter to the Tottot-

ville Homeowners Association yesterday, asked for documents that would substantiate the homeowners’ claims.

The lawmaker said it was surprising to hear the complaints considering that the subdivision is newly developed.

“I’m very concerned about these complaints because Tottotville subdivision is fairly new, so the homes should be in

Police detective is arrested for alleged assault, battery

An off-duty police detective was taken into custody on Christmas Day after authorities arrested him for assault incidents.

According to Department of Public Safety public information officer PO2 Eric F. David, 33-year-old detective Juan R. Limes was nabbed for charges of disturbing the peace and assault and battery in two separate incidents on Christmas Eve, Dec. 24.

David disclosed that the first incident occurred at about 11pm at Club Taboo in Garapan.

“The off duty detective got into an argument over his missing keys with [the first] victim,” he said. “The suspect then assaulted and caused bodily harm to the victim while in their car at the parking lot of Club Taboo.”

David said the two left the establishment and were heading home when the suspect accused the victim of “seeing someone else.”

“He then started to beat her in the vehicle as they were heading home.”

The suspect dropped off the 30-year-old female victim and left the area.

The other domestic violence incident involving Limes happened outside the Don’s Sports Bar in Garapan early Friday morning, according to investigation conducted by police detective Andrea C. Ozawa.

Police officers Eric David and Michael Langdon were conducting patrol when they noticed two persons who were apparently involved in a fight. When they came closer to verify, they saw

Limes standing over a woman who was on the ground.

The woman initially responded that everything was okay when asked by the officers, Ozawa said. David, however, noticed Limes hugging the victim and whispering in her ear, while the woman continued to cry and push the suspect away.

David ordered Limes to let the woman go, but he refused and began to shout at the victim. David then held the suspect’s right wrist, but Limes continued to throw punches at the woman. David struggled with the Limes and was hit by punches and kicks in blocking the assault on the woman.

“Officer Langdon came to assist and struggled with the suspect to let go of the victim’s hair. The suspect continued to kick so both officers [David and Langdon] got kicked,” Ozawa said.

Further, information officer David said the victim in the first incident, who did not report the incident to DPS the night of the incident, brought the matter to her brother, who is also police officer. Her brother made the complaint.

David said any criminal case involving an officer of the department is forwarded to Internal Affairs for investigation.

As of press time, David said Limes was still in custody and bail is set for \$10,500.

He said if found guilty in court, proper action would be taken and Limes may be suspended or terminated. *(Shan Seman and John Ravelo)*

Woman jumps off balcony, injures self

A 32-year-old woman was injured early Sunday morning after reportedly jumping off a second floor balcony.

Department of Public Safety public information officer PO2 Eric F. David disclosed yesterday that the woman, 32-year-old Zong Zha Li, was found by a responding officer at the Guang Zhou Restaurant in western Garapan and was not responding. He said the woman had no pulse and was not breathing.

David said Fire Rescue personnel was also dispatched to the scene and transported the woman

to the Commonwealth Health Center for further treatment.

Details on her injuries were not provided. It was also not immediately learned if she survived the fall.

Investigation revealed that the woman was standing on the second floor balcony when she jumped off and injured herself.

The call was reported to DPS at 8:02am. An unidentified female placed the call, David said.

In a phone interview, David said the incident is a possible suicide or homicide. *(Shan Seman)*

sound condition at this time. In any event, I am willing to look into the complaints....However, before I can make any formal inquiry, I would need documented complaints from each homeowner,” said Villagomez.

Initial documents showed that Tottotville homeowners have been complaining of water leaks from ceilings, window sills, and exterior doors; water-damaged rear service doors due to lack of roof protection; rattling water pipe sounds on dry wall locations; peeling off

paint on concrete ceilings; and damaged roof tiles.

An occupant also complained of water seeping in from the floor to wall connection during heavy rain, as well as water ponding.

Another homeowner complained of ceiling leak, possibly from a crack in the concrete roof; ceiling leak between the master bedroom and toilet; leak from underneath the kitchen sink; hole in the outside wall; water traces and wall paint bubbles; loose kitchen door

pulls; and separation between concrete wall and wooden closet framings.

There are about 45 homeowners who currently live in Totottville, the first subdivision built by the Northern Marianas Housing Corp. in 2000 primarily for low- to moderate-income families.

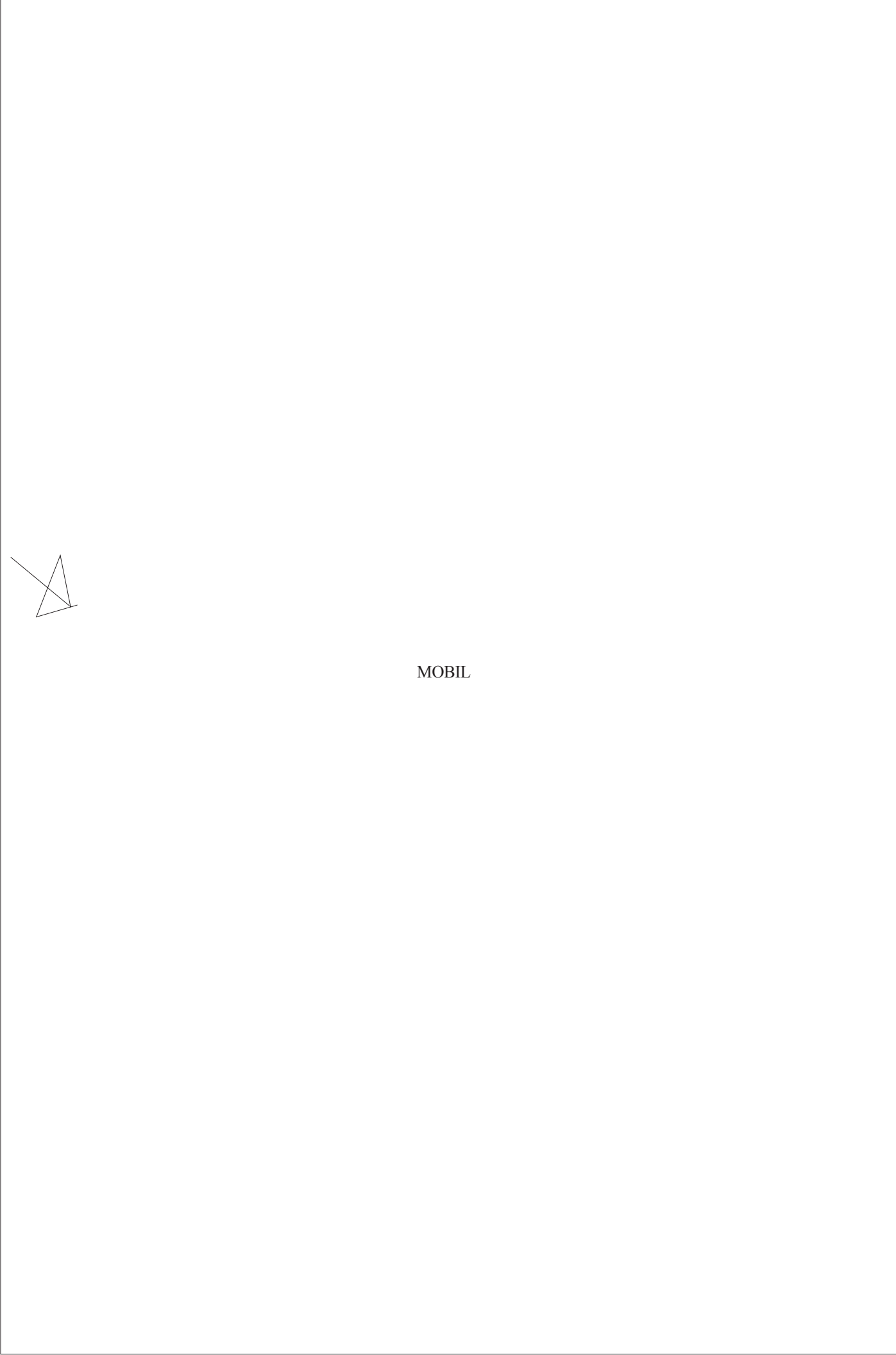
The units were awarded through a lottery conducted by NMHC a few years back.

Tottotville was hailed by both government and private authorities as a model subdivision since

it is fully paved, has a basketball court, and has 24-hour water and electricity.

The uniformly designed houses—each unit containing two bedrooms and a garage—were designed by Hawaii-based SSFM company and reportedly constructed by Telesource, which allegedly had subcontracted the project to smaller construction groups.

These subcontractors allegedly used cheap construction materials in building the Tottotville houses.



Island Snapshots



COURTESY CALL

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

While in Washington, D.C. last week, Thomas J. Camacho, right, CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities executive director, stopped by the office of his friend Fatos Tarifa, Ph.D., Ambassador for the Republic of Albania to the United States, for a courtesy visit. Tarifa was recently in the CNMI for a visit accompanied by David Funderburk Ph.D. former U.S. congressman and U.S. Ambassador to Romania.



TOY DRIVE

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/MSG BURKE

Members of the Kagman High School's Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps-Ayuyu Battalion took a truckload of toys to the Karidat Foundation for their annual toy drive to help needy kids for Christmas. From left are cadet Capt. Michael Romolor, cadet Capt. Kesia Dulei, cadet Maj. Alvin Borja, and cadet Lt. Col. Justin Santos.



RIFLE DRILL

SHAN SEMAN

The Kagman High School JROTC rifle drill team performs during the Troop Fest 2004 held at the American Memorial Park Thursday last week.



ENGAGED

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Congratulations go out to Larissa Mae Adams and Mark David Bitner, who will celebrate their engagement in a party held today at the Claret Restaurant of the Dai-Ichi Hotel Saipan Beach on Saipan. The two will be wed on July 15, 2005, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Larissa is the daughter of Lewie and Rosa Adams of As Lito, Saipan. Mark is the son of Dean and Mary Lee Bitner of Minneapolis, Minnesota.



BIRTHDAY BOY

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday greetings go to Diego E. Cabrera Jr., who is celebrating his birthday today, Dec. 28. Greetings come from your Mom, Dad, and sisters.



DISABILITY FUNDRAISER

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Rep. Janet U. Maratita, center, and Rep. Martin B. Ada, right, pose with another guest at the dinner fundraiser held in support of persons with disabilities and their families.



SYMBOL OF PEACE

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela, right, poses with consultant to the mayor William S. Torres, left, and Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation's Yasuko Yamazaki in front of a dogwood tree just planted by Tudela. United States mayors donated the dogwood tree as a symbol of peace to the city of Hiroshima during the 2004 Japan-U.S. Cities Summit in Hiroshima, Japan, on Economic Programs and Business Forum in November.



SAT PREPARATORY PROGRAM

MARCONI CALINDAS

The first SAT Preparatory Program was held yesterday afternoon at the Multi-Purpose Center. More than a hundred students came to the event to acquire tips on how to do good in the test. The people behind the success of this event are, from left, Ana S. Teregeyo of the Office of Washington Representative, Youth Congress Sen. Roselle Calvo, Harvard University Math major and guest speaker Jennifer Balakrishnan and Workforce Investment Agency Director Jesse Stein. Guam Senator Carmen Fernandez also graced the event (not in the picture).

Search for ‘Little Big Star’ to be launched

Early next year, the Marianas High School chapter of the National Honor Society will host the first CNMI’s Little Big Star Talent Competition sponsored by Tan Holdings Corp. This show will reach out to children ages 12 and below, giving them a chance to showcase their diverse talents, to be recognized, to entertain their families and the community, and to have a day of quality fun.

This big event will be launched on March 5, 2005 and parents with children who meet the age requirements are encouraged to participate. Numerous prizes will be given out ranging from \$100 to \$1,000, along with trophies,

sashes, certificates and the title of “CNMI’s Little Big Star.”

All competitors will have to audition before finalists are selected; auditions will be held at Marianas High School and the audition dates are Jan. 22, 23, and 29.

Three age group categories—4 and under, 5-8, and 9-12—will showcase their talents in dancing, acting, singing, and other areas.

Applications for this event will be available at the following locations: Payless Shoe Source (San Jose), Dolphins Wholesale, Price Costco, XO Market, Power 99, and Marianas High School.

“The funds we raise in this endeavor will support a chari-

table organization and will be used to achieve another of our objectives for this year: a student exchange visit. Fifty percent of all funds we raise, post-expenses, will be donated to the Make A Wish Foundation. The remaining post-expenses

funds will be used to support NHS’s planned exchange visit to Australia. Thus, your support will enable us to stage a significant event for the young people of the CNMI, to raise money for a charitable organization, and to support the

growth and development of future CNMI leaders from the National Honor Society,” said Semon Igama, a member of the National Honor Society.

Interested parents are encouraged to pick up an application for their children before the due

date, which is on Jan. 15, 2005. All applications must be turned in at the Marianas High School main office, which is open from 8am to 4pm.

For more information, contact Lyvonn Taisacan at 235-0014 or Lorraine Catienza at 235-6800.

USS *Bonhomme Richard* to visit Guam

USS *Bonhomme Richard* (LHD-6) is scheduled to arrive on Guam today, Dec. 28, for a routine port visit.

USS *Duluth* (LPD-6), an amphibious transport dock, is also scheduled to arrive Dec. 28. USS *Rushmore* (LSD-47), a landing ship dock, will be joining the other two ships Dec.

30. The ships are part of Expeditionary Strike Group 5.

Bonhomme Richard is a multi-purpose amphibious assault ship, which deployed from its homeport in San Diego Dec. 6 for a six-month deployment in support of the global war on terrorism. Known as the “Revolutionary Gator,” *Bonhomme Richard* em-

barks, deploys and lands elements of a Marine landing force in amphibious assault operations by helicopter, landing craft, amphibious vehicle or any combination of these means.

Bonhomme Richard has approximately 3,000 service members. The Marine detachment makes up over half of the

crew. Capt. J. Scott Jones is the ship’s commanding officer.

Duluth is home to more than 400 officers and sailors and 900 Marines. *Rushmore* has a crew of over 300 sailors and the ability to accommodate more than 600 Marines.

The ships are expected to leave Guam Jan. 2.

Power outage on feeder 2

There will be a power outage tomorrow, Wednesday, Dec. 29, on Feeder 2 from 1:30pm to 4:30pm.

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp.’s Power Division said this outage is needed to remove and install a new 45’ power pole. This interruption is necessary to allow CUC lineman to work on de-energized power lines safely.

This outage will affect the following areas: Garapan Fishing Basin, Kristo Rai, Horiguchi Building, Century Building,

China House, National Office Supply, Star Water, Megabyte, Triple J, Monica’s Gallery, BJ’s Restaurant, Char’s Store, Oleai Center (including First Hawaiian Bank and FHP), Joeten Motor’s, J’s Bowling Center, and MVA office (all customers between these areas will be affected).

The San Jose traffic light will also be affected.

CUC requests the cooperation and patience of people driving and residing in these areas while the work is completed.

A whisk there and a sip here: Best drinks for the holidays

By MARCONI CALINDAS
REPORTER

The holidays can be the coldest of seasons, particularly at night while strolling along Beach Road in late December and early January, when the chill bite of the cold air from Japan gets wafted to our neck of the woods in the Pacific. Grabbing a hot cup of coffee, cocoa or just plain tea can be the best way to fight the cold and what better way to ward off the chill than to stay at home and prepare a hot drink for your loved ones?

In its mission to enhance the “well-being and quality of life of the CNMI community through research and extension services,” the NMC Cooperative Research Extension Education Service shares what it believes to be one of the best recipes that the family will surely love: a taste of coffee, cocoa and cappuccino mix that will surely win your family members’ hearts.

These creamy, flavorful and sweet hot drinks are so easy to make and can be the best gifts for your friends and families this season.

Toffee Coffee Mix

- 1 cup instant coffee granules
- 2 cups dry milk powder
- 1 cup non-dairy coffee creamer
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup butterscotch flavored pudding mix

Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend to a fine powder. Place in air-tight jars, cover tightly and store in a cool, dark place. Use 2-3 spoonfuls of Toffee Coffee mix in a mug and add boiling water to fill up. Stir well and serve.

Instant Cocoa Mix

- 1 cup dry milk powder
- 1 cup non-dairy coffee creamer
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup cocoa powder
- Marshmallows (optional)

Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend to a fine powder. Place in airtight jars. Combine 2 tablespoons of mix with 1 cup of boiling water. Stir well and serve.

Cappuccino Mix

- 1 cup instant coffee creamer
- 1 cup instant sweetened chocolate drink mix
- 2/3 cup instant coffee crystals
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg

Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend to a fine powder. Place in airtight jars, in a cool dark place. To serve, place 3 tablespoons of Cappuccino mix to 8 ounces of hot water and stir well to blend. Makes three cups dry mix.

BOG XMAS CLUB

Opinion

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AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Coral peril

Twenty percent of the world's coral reefs "have been effectively destroyed and show no immediate prospect of recovery." An additional 24 percent "are under imminent risk of collapse through human pressures," and an additional 26 percent "are under a longer term threat of collapse." These are only some of the conclusions of an exhaustive new report by 240 scientists in 98 countries, working under the auspices of the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network. Coral reefs, in addition to being breathtakingly beautiful, are among the cradles of life on Earth—hotbeds of biodiversity critical to sustaining oceanic health. But a combination of global warming, pollution, overfishing, diseases and other factors is ravaging reefs worldwide. While Australian and Pacific reefs remain relatively healthy, the report documents devastating declines elsewhere, including the Caribbean region, where coral cover on many reefs has declined by up to 80 percent. If something isn't done soon, it will be too late for many reefs to recover.

The dire threat to the world's—and America's—oceans is hardly a surprise, and it isn't limited to coral reefs either. Two major task forces have recently documented the grave ecological conditions of America's coastal waters. The studies basically show the same thing: People are using the oceans in a fashion that can't be sustained, and, absent serious change across a range of human behaviors, the oceans will die off. Yet despite the widespread agreement on the nature and severity of the problem, action has been slow.

Along with the related issue of climate change, this is the preeminent environmental issue of our time. President Bush should make it a priority of his second term. An opportunity to begin doing so is coming; the administration by law has to respond by Dec. 20 to the recommendations of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, which Congress created in 2000 to examine America's policy toward its coastal waters. So far, there is no indication the administration is contemplating the needed dramatic shifts in policy. But the oceans—and their precious corals—cannot afford delay.

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Let's stop sleepwalking through history

By STEWART L. UDALL
SPECIAL TO THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

Scientists tell us that global warming is an omnipresent reality, that in this century it will change the lives of all of us and alter our relationship to the physical world. Only a comprehensive, global strategy will enable humanity to gradually cope with its implications.

Robust, immediate action is needed. Forget wrangling about ratification of the modest Kyoto treaty. Instead, the 20 industrialized countries (let's call them the Power Bloc) that produce most of the world's destructive carbon dioxide emissions must join together to take action.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, stripped of its military trappings, might be a model, and the United States, responsible for 25 percent of those emissions, must lead the way. President Bush has the power and the prestige to convene such an entity and galvanize such an effort. It could be his most important legacy.

For the last two centuries the burning of fossil fuel—coal, natural gas and crude oil—has been propelling human civilization. But fossil resources are finite—they really will run out—and their use has altered Earth's atmosphere. On both fronts, Americans are in denial.

Why are we so blind? We have been conditioned to believe that catastrophe will not occur, that humankind is perpetually on the threshold of discoveries that will magically solve our dilemmas.

As a freshman congressman in 1955, I sat spellbound as physicist John Von Newman claimed that by 1980 nuclear power plants would produce electricity so cheap it wouldn't have to be metered. Such promises have fostered a belief that the United States will achieve "energy independence" and that science will produce easy panaceas (remember fusion and breeder reactors?). They have even spawned skepticism that the phenomenon called global warming is real.

Organizing an international effort and a NATO-style group to combat real energy and environmental problems would be a big step toward ending our belief in magic. What would such an organization look like?

Each country would bear the expense of sending its best scientists, entrepreneurs, energy specialists, architects and planners to serve on policymaking panels. Each nation could help pay for necessary research and development; logic would suggest that each should ante up based on the carbon dioxide its energy installations produced the previous year.

Fast action must be the goal: establishing priorities, agreeing on what is possible, spreading and inventing strategies that curb fossil

fuel use and increase renewable resource use.

There are four sectors in which dramatic gains could be made. First: electric power use and production. Generating electricity also generates 40 percent of greenhouse gases. A study by the Electric Power Research Institute has concluded that this industry can be fundamentally transformed through serious investment in clean, efficient new means of production and transmission and such simple expedients as sensors that would turn off the lights when people left a room.

The second sector in which change is achievable involves the built environment. Already architects such as Arizona's Edward Mazria are proving that buildings can be operated with "green" efficiency at little extra cost. Using existing renewable energy technologies (solar, thermal, wind and biomass), buildings can be made "carbon-neutral," requiring no fossil-fuel energy to operate. This alone would eliminate nearly half of current global carbon dioxide emissions.

Next come cars and our extravagant automotive transportation system. The Power Bloc must coordinate and agree on ways to encourage—even mandate—the spread of fuel-efficient cars (including hybrids and lighter vehicles) and new fuels.

In the United States, we have finally begun to consider encouraging fuel saving in the way highway systems are designed (allowing hybrids into the carpool lane, for example) or through the carrot and the stick of taxation. We must do more and we must do it in concert with the rest of the world.

Finally, the fourth sector: exploiting renewable energy sources. Money and research are required to perfect new ways of generating and delivering solar, wind and geothermal power. The small actions of individual governments—like Colorado's vote to require its electric companies to generate 10 percent of their power via renewables in the next 10 years—must be multiplied nationally and internationally.

Could Bush bring together representatives from China, Russia, India and the other members in the Power Bloc to address such issues? Could he jump-start a fresh global effort to contain and roll back what his administration calls "climate change"? Of course he could.

But will he? As was the case when President Nixon went to China and President Reagan made overtures to the Soviet Union, when modern U.S. presidents have acted boldly—and often against expectations—they have changed the world. We can only hope that Bush has the same lofty ambition.

Udall represented Arizona in the House from 1954 to 1961 and was secretary of the Interior from 1961 to 1969.

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France in pain

By **ROBERT D. BLACKWILL**
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

After recently spending nearly two weeks in Paris and having many conversations with old friends from France’s national security elite, I conclude that intellectually, most French want the Bush administration to succeed in Iraq. But emotionally, many want it to fail. Their Cartesian upbringing makes the French understand the consequences for France of an American defeat in Iraq. They know that it would give a profound boost to Islamic terrorism everywhere, including in France. It would destabilize Iraq and could lead to a fracturing of that country—even to civil war. It would introduce another acutely destabilizing element in an already wobbly Middle East region. And it could lead to prolonged U.S. retrenchment as we sought the reasons for our catastrophic failure. In their minds and public statements, the French declare genuinely that Iraq must not fall to Islamic extremism. But at the same time, these members of the French elite are incensed about U.S. policy toward Iraq and how we got where we are. They are passionately certain that it was a mistake for the United States to force regime change on Iraq, that it has spread international terrorism and made the world more dangerous, and that they told us so before we embarked. They remind us of Charles de Gaulle’s equally ignored advice to John F. Kennedy in 1961 not to become militarily involved in Vietnam. And they remember Suez, the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, the Egypt-Israel

peace treaty and all the other times the United States and France have seen the Middle East so very, very differently. The French also argue that Iraq is only the latest demonstration of an arrogance of American power that has been growing since the end of the Cold War and has reached new heights during the current administration. They are frustrated because France—and Europe—are too weak and divided to affect U.S. international behavior. As these throbbing emotions swirl around in the City of Light, our French friends are in agony that the United States should now be rescued and rewarded when they are sure that France is right and the Bush administration is wrong on the most fundamental dimensions of Iraq policy, the Middle East including Israel-Palestine and the global war on terrorism. They think most of the world agrees with them and not with Washington. All this was made clear in President Jacques Chirac’s recent comments during his news conference in London with British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Nevertheless, France, because of its own vital national interests, must now work to promote a U.S. victory in Iraq. Oh, what pain. If only the French could find a way for Iraq to succeed without the United States succeeding, that would be a perfect outcome. If only the United States could be made to suffer for its excesses regarding Iraq without damaging France. Alas, for the French that seems an impossible—if recurring—dream. So, on the subject of Iraq, the French are torn between rational analysis, which is so admirable a part of France’s national character, and volcanic feelings generated lower in their anatomies. They are therefore

ready to join, if haltingly, with the United States to bring more stability to Iraq and the Middle East and to simultaneously tell anyone who will listen that U.S. policy in that region is a disaster, that they do not expect it to change in the next four years and that France has been proven right all along. To put it mildly, this cannot be a source of bilateral harmony. It will take skillful and quiet diplomacy at the highest levels to take the next phase of U.S.-French relations in a positive direction, especially since the venture will be uphill. The substantive differences between the two governments on these issues are huge, and their domestic audiences make the task even harder. All the same, as a strong supporter of the president, of the liberation of Iraq and of robust trans-Atlantic cooperation, I believe the time is ripe for the two nations to make an effort to choreograph a mutual ascent. Bad ties between the United States and France complicate America’s Middle East diplomacy and cause problems for our friends in Europe. Unlike some of our allies, France does not have a post-modernist army; theirs fights. For those ready to give up on reaching some accommodation with the French regarding Iraq and the Middle East, I say, not yet. With the president going to Europe early next year, let’s try with the French as Count Basie use to intone regarding “April in Paris,” one more once.

The writer was President Bush’s deputy national security adviser for strategic planning and also served as presidential envoy to Iraq. He is now president of Barbour Griffith & Rogers International, a lobbying firm.

Letters to the Editor

‘The case of the (Mafnas) spoken record’

Point 1: You have stated that the Governor and the Legislature have no voice in the disposition or use of indigenous public lands. Are these people NOT indigenous Chamorro people with the same rights to put forth their opinions as others? And further, do they not hold a responsibility to represent the people of the CNMI AND to further the just will of the majority of those people?

Point 2: You stated that Azmar’s Don Farrell implied that the MPLA board members were “irresponsible and derelict,” yet in Mr. Farrell’s recent letter he noted Azmar’s “respect” for each one of them and has never cast any aspersion at MPLA or the board. Are the words “irresponsible” and “derelict” the latest in a long line of your word substitutions?

Point 3: You have stated that any of the MPLA board members would have been “a complete moron or severely corrupted” to have granted ANY type of permit. Is it your position that should a decision not be to your liking the board would be composed of “morons” and “severely corrupted”? I believe you owe the MPLA board an apology for that one!

Point 4: You refer to your “interests that are being betrayed or compromised.” Exactly what interests are you referring to, sir, and how are they being betrayed? Do you not want to see Pagan developed and a new revenue source developed as well as more local employment for ALL the people of the CNMI?

Point 5: Now you have gone too far. You state that “we” (who

is we?) discern that your critics would use matrimonial ties for personal gain and enrichment at the expense of YOUR children. This is the vilest of insults. You assert that those of non-indigenous extraction would marry into the indigenous population solely to “use” that population for personal gains and enrichment! That not only insults every non-indigenous person in the CNMI but also insults the indigenous population as it implies that Chamorro spouses would allow themselves to be used for such and are traitors to your purist and racist attitudes. Your slippery slide down the slope of arrogance, racism and self-indulgence is complete. Your constant casting about of personal aspersions has rendered your rhetoric as meaningless as that of an immature, insecure, tantrum-throwing child hell-bent to have his way while holding everyone else hostage to your whining. Personally, I know that my Chamorro wife HAS enriched my life, but in that most precious of manners: the blending of yet another wonderful culture into my own and our children are proud of their rich heritage! You owe everyone in the CNMI a public apology for this most egregious of behavior!

Dr. Thomas D. Arkle Jr.
San Jose, Tinian

What it means to be American

This morning my children and I listened to Harry Blalock read an article expressing a view of what it means to be an American and a patriot. If you heard it, you know that he thinks it means to qualify you have to be a Christian, English speaker and not like things like multi-culturalism. It was a very strict definition that my children and I decided we did not agree with. To me being a patriotic American means being someone who cherishes the ideals and principles that have made America great. Those ideals and principles have been strengthened through the different waves of immigrants who have become American. We are great because we are African and Italian and German, Filipino and Chinese and Pacific Islander. We are Muslim and Hindu and Jewish and Christian and everything else. We are a great country because it doesn’t matter what country your parents came from, as long as they had the dream to be part of a society that protects the weak with laws like the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. It doesn’t matter what religion or color you are if you cherish freedom of speech for those with unpopular ideas. Some people think that September 11 means that we should narrow our eyes and pull in and cut the freedoms that they were

afraid of in the first place. They think it means we narrow our definition of what America is and invite those who don’t share the view to get the heck out. For me and a lot of other Americans of every color and religion, September 11 showed what a beautiful country we have all built together with our different languages and different cultures coming together to celebrate a nation of freedom and justice for all. September 11 made freedom-loving Americans realize that, to keep America great, we need all of us to work together, to speak out against injustice and intolerance and not let anyone narrow our definition of what is patriotic or American. What my children and I heard Mr. Blalock describe on the radio this morning was not the America my immigrant ancestors traveled to generations ago in search of a better life. Let’s remember that, in great part, it’s our differences that make America great. Above all, we have to strive not to become like the intolerant fundamentalists who attacked us.

Vicki King Taitano
Capitol Hill

‘Oil for food’ worked

By **JAMES DOBBINS**
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

American outrage over the diversion of U.N.-supervised Iraqi oil-for-food money seems to miss three salient points. First, no American funds were stolen. Second, no U.N. funds were stolen. Third, the oil-for-food program achieved its two objectives: providing food to the Iraqi people and preventing Saddam Hussein from rebuilding his military threat to the region—and in particular from reconstituting his programs for weapons of mass destruction. The oil-for-food program was part of a comprehensive set of U.N.-mandated sanctions designed to prevent Saddam from again becoming a threat to his neighbors. The program was intended to allow the proceeds from Iraqi oil exports to be used to purchase food and medicine for the Iraqi people, but not weapons or WMD-related technology for the Saddam regime. It is now clear, based on the most exhaustive American post-intervention examination, that the U.N. sanctions regime, including both U.N. weapons inspectors and the U.N.-administered oil-for-food program, fully met this core objective. At the direction of the Security Council, and as a result of the international embargo and international inspections, Iraq destroyed its stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction in the early 1990s, did not acquire new such weapons and did not even reconstitute a program to develop nuclear weapons. More broadly, U.N. sanctions resulted in a steady decline in Iraq’s military capabilities from the end of the Persian Gulf War in 1991 to the day of the American-led intervention. At the same time, the oil-for-food program served its humanitarian goal of feeding the Iraqi people, if not perfectly at least so effectively that Washington asked the United Nations to keep the program in effect for six months after the United States took power in Baghdad. It is clear that Saddam and his henchmen took advantage of inadequate U.N. oversight to siphon large sums from the program, but the money was Iraqi to begin with and the amounts siphoned were never enough to undermine the purpose for which the sanctions were in place. It is also clear that unscrupulous non-Iraqi businessmen sometimes, apparently, with the knowledge of their governments, connived in these diversions and drew illegitimate profits from them. Thus the bad news is that the United Nations proved unequal to the task of preventing a rogue regime from stealing some of its own money. The good news is that this same U.N. machinery proved equal to the task of preventing that regime from fielding weapons of mass destruction, developing nuclear weapons and re-emerging as a military threat to its neighbors. So the U.N. performance was mixed, but at least it got its priorities straight.

See **OIL** on Page 12

29 more temblors jolt Asia after 9.0-strong tremor

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

Twenty-nine earthquakes with magnitudes ranging from 5.4 to 7.3 shook several portions of Asia in a single day after the 9.0-strong quake that triggered tsunamis in at least six Asian countries and left thousands of people dead.

The United States’ National Earth-

quake Information Center also recorded a 4.5-strong quake on Rota, which occurred around 11:56am last Wednesday. The quake had a depth of 42.7 kilometers.

Before the intensity 9.0 quake off the coast of Northern Sumatra, Indonesia—the strongest earthquake in the world in the last 40 years—the series of tremors in Asia begun on Christmas

Day in Java, Indonesia. That quake measured 4.6 on the Richter scale.

From the occurrence of the 4.6-strong quake until yesterday, the NEIC has recorded at least 31 earthquakes in different portions of Asia.

The epicenters of some 18 earthquakes were located in India, while those of 12 other quakes—including the one that had record-breaking in-

tensity—were located in Indonesia. An earthquake measuring intensity 5.8 jolted the Philippines’ Mindanao archipelago.

The strongest of the quakes that followed the 9.0-strong quake measured intensity 7.3. The NEIC said the quake, which had a depth of 10 kilometers, occurred at 4:21am (GMT) Sunday in Nicobar Islands, India. That quake pre-

ceded an intensity 6.1-quake that shook the Andaman Islands, India less than an hour and a half earlier.

As of press time, the latest earthquake recorded by the NEIC happened in Northern Sumatra, Indonesia and measured 6.3 on the Richter scale. The quake, which had a depth of 10 kilometers, occurred yesterday at 9:39am (GMT).

CHAIN

From Page 1

other slipped violently, creating a bulge on the sea bottom that could be as high as 10 meters (yards) and hundreds of kilometers (miles) long, one scientist said.

“It’s just like moving an enormous paddle at the bottom of the sea,” said David Booth, a seismologist at the British Geological Survey. “A big column of water has moved, we’re talking about billions of tons. This is an enormous disturbance.”

Moving at about 800 kmp (500 mph), the waves took more than two hours to reach Sri Lanka, where the human toll has been horrific, and longer to spread to India and the east coast of Africa.

And because such tidal waves rarely occur in the Indian Ocean, there is no system in place to warn coastal communities they are about to be hit, such as exists in the Pacific, Booth said.

“With 20-20 vision of hindsight, that’ll be reconsidered,” he said.

An Australian scientist had suggest-

ed in September that an Indian Ocean warning system be set up, but it takes a year to create one. Also, those living along the Indian Ocean’s shores were less likely than Pacific coastal dwellers to know the warning signs of an impending tidal wave—water receding unusually fast and far from the shore, Booth said.

Thousands were killed in countries from Indonesia to Somalia.

The underwater quake, which the U.S. Geological Survey put at magnitude 9.0, was the biggest since 1964, when a 9.2-magnitude temblor struck Alaska, also touching off tsunami waves. There were at least a half-dozen powerful aftershocks, one of magnitude 7.3.

Enzo Boschi, the head of Italy’s National Geophysics Institute, likened the quake’s power to detonating a million atomic bombs the size of those dropped on Japan during World War II, and said the shaking was so powerful it even disturbed the Earth’s rotation.

“All the planet is vibrating” from the quake, he told Italian state radio. Other scientists said it was early too

say whether the rotation was affected by the quake.

The earthquake occurred at a spot where the Indian Ocean plate is gradually being forced underneath Sumatra, which is part of the Eurasian plate, at about the speed at which a human fingernail grows, Booth explained.

“This slipping doesn’t occur smoothly,” he said. Rocks along the edge stick against one another and pent-up energy builds over hundreds of years.

It’s “almost like stretching an elastic band, and then when the strength of the rock isn’t sufficient to withstand the stress, then all along the fault line the rocks will move,” he said.

Indonesia is well-known as a major quake center, sitting along a series of fault lines dubbed the “Ring of Fire.” But scientists are unable to predict where and when quakes will strike with any precision.

The force of Sunday’s earthquake shook unusually far afield, causing buildings to sway hundreds of kilometers (miles) from the epicenter, from Singapore to the city of Chiang Mai in northern Thailand, and in Bangladesh.

MORE

From Page 1

scale looting and a prison break of 200 inmates.

Indonesia, Sri Lanka and India each reported thousands dead, and Thailand—a Western tourist hotspot—said hundreds were dead and thousands missing. Deaths also were reported Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar and Bangladesh.

Signs of the carnage were everywhere. Dozens of bodies still clad in swimming trunks lined beaches in Thailand. Villagers in Indonesia picked through their destroyed homes amid the smell of rotting corpses. Rescuers elsewhere found victims wedged in trees and littering beaches.

Some 25,000 soldiers and 10 air force helicopters searched for victims in Sri Lanka, where more than a million people were driven from their homes. Another million people were reported homeless in Indonesia.

Thai warships steamed toward outlying islands to rescue survivors, while the Indian air force used helicopters to rush food and medicine to stricken seashore areas.

John Krueger, 34, of Winter Park, Colo., described being inside his bungalow Sunday on Khao Luk Beach, north of Phuket, with his wife when the water filled it and blew it apart.

“The water rushed under the bungalow, brought our floor up and raised us to the ceiling. The water blew out our doors, our windows and the back concrete wall. My wife was swept away with the wall, and I had to bust my way through the roof,” Krueger said while waiting to talk to a U.S. Embassy official at Phuket City Hall. “It was like being in a washing machine.”

The earthquake hit at 6:58 a.m. Sri Lanka time; the tsunami came 2 1/2 hours later, without warning, on a morning of crystal blue skies. Sunbathers and snorkelers, cars and cottages, fishing boats and even a lighthouse were swept away.

“It’s an extraordinary calamity of such colossal proportions that the damage has been unprecedented,” said Chief Minister Jayaram Jayalalithaa of India’s Tamil Nadu, a southern state which reported 1,705 dead, many of them strewn along beaches, virtual open-air mortuaries.

SAIPAN

From Page 1

Wongduen Phantajaitham, who has also been on Saipan for 15 years now, was doubly troubled over how she was going to break the news to her compatriots when she first learned of the tragedy.

“I’m sad. When I saw the paper, I knew there’s something wrong,” said Wongduen. “I don’t know how to tell the Thai people. I couldn’t do anything. I am shocked.”

□ □ □

Saipan’s Thai community yesterday were in collective shock over what happened to some of their countrymen, as well as other nations affected by killer tsunamis that swept through South Asia, Southeast Asia, and parts of Africa Monday.

Rian “Khai” Charoenkhai, president of the Saipan Thai community, expressed his grief over the disaster that reports say have claimed at least 600 lives on Thailand and more than 20,000 across the two continents.

“I feel very, very sad. It’s the first time in our country,” he said. “The village where it happened, it was a very nice village. Very clear water. We are sorry it happened,” he said.

The Thai community on Saipan celebrated with gusto the birthday of the King Bhumipol Adulyadej of Thailand on Dec. 5 but the news of the tsunami hitting their home country hard has now made it a distant memory.

“We heard about it from the news on TV,” Khai recalled, “People in that area are very nice. Sorry it happened and it’s so sad.” Khai has been meeting with the Thai community members and discussed what they can do to help their people.

Wari, a Thai restaurateur, extends her sympathy to her people. “I feel sorry for those who died,” she said. “I also feel sorry that I don’t know what to do to help them.” Though Wari is from Bangkok, miles north of Phuket, she still feels the loss this catastrophe has brought the province.

Saipan Thai community welcomes any contribution whether cash or in kind. Donations could be coursed through Rian “Khai” Charoenkhai at tel. Nos. 287-1823, 236-8823 and 235-3787.

□ □ □

On the night she first heard the news, Wongduen said she thought that it was just one of those small time foreign news. “I heard about Thailand but it was night so I didn’t pay much attention to it,” she recalled, “But the next morning when I went back to work I saw the news on TV and it was all over. That’s when I knew it was something big.”

That same day, her friend Pani paid her a visit. Her friend was troubled that her family has been caught up in the tragedy. Wongduen calmed her down and told her not to worry and they would get in touch with her family.

Wongduen couldn’t help, however, from recalling scenes she saw on CNN of ravaging waves sweeping and washing away the beach shores, tearing small buildings and stores, and dragging away cars and people. She just closed her eyes in fear as she held her friend’s hand tightly.

Thitiporn Itisaiair, another Thai woman who has been on Saipan for 17 years now, is still in shock over the incident. Also called Om, Itisaiair is married to a local and is from Ayuthaya, the ancient capital of Thailand.

“When I saw the news on CNN, I was so sad,” she related, “Not everybody

knew about what happened because everybody was working.” Some of the Thai people here, according to her, do not have cable, which is why they didn’t hear about the news until now. Om, squinting, recalled seeing people swimming when the huge wave dragged them out to sea. Relating this made Om fidget in her seat. She shuddered and rubbed the goose bumps on her arms.

Both Om and Wongduen said that this is the first time such a thing happened to Thailand. “I’m 48 now and this is the first time this tragedy happened to us,” Wongduen affirmed.

Pratheep Lekmek, a maintenance worker and a carpenter was at work and didn’t know of the incident until later. His staff, Saiyan Danroraung and Rungphet Kiangkrathok, were also assisting him and were completely clueless of what was going on in the news. They didn’t have a TV at work. They were only informed via a phone call from Wongduen and Om, who told them of what had happened.

“I’m so sad. I called my family immediately,” Pratheep said. He has two sons who are still studying. This incident frightened him so much that, although his family lives far from Phuket, his heart still pounded when he heard of the news.

In the case of Rungphet, his place is just a town away from Phuket, that’s why he also sought Pratheep to allow him to call home. He learned that his family is safe in their hometown. All these men can only share was that they felt sad when they learned about it yesterday morning.

The group said they will meet with the entire Thai community to discuss further what help they can extend to the victims and their families. They will donate cash, clothing and food.

At Thailand’s beach resorts, packed with Europeans fleeing the winter cold at the peak of the holiday season, families and friends had tearful reunions Monday after a day of fear that their loved ones had been swept away.

Katri Seppanen, 27, of Helsinki, Finland, walked around barefoot, in her salt water-stained T-shirt and skirt, at the Patong Hospital waiting room where she spent the night with her mother and sister. She had a bandaged cut on her leg.

“The water went back, back, back, so far away, and everyone wondered what it was—a full moon or what? Then we saw the wave come, and we ran,” said a tearful Seppanen, who was on the popular Patong beach with her family. The wave washed over their heads and separated them.

Fifty-eight half-naked and swimming suit-clad corpses lay in rows outside the Patong Hospital emergency room. Three babies under the age of one were among the victims. A photo of one baby was posted on the wall of victims, the little corpse in a nearby refrigerator.

Thai authorities said 35 of the victims have been identified as foreigners, but the number of Western and Asian tourists who perished in Thailand is expected to be far higher, while another 40 foreign tourists were reported killed in Sri Lanka, including some from Japan.

At least three Americans were among the dead—two in Sri Lanka and one in Thailand, according to State Department spokesman Noel Clay. He said a number of other Americans were injured, but he had no details.

“We’re working on ways to help. The United States will be very responsive,” Clay said.

“It all seems to have happened in the space of 20 minutes. A massive tidal wave of extreme ferocity ... smashed everything in sight to smithereens,” she said.

At least 4,491 were killed in Indonesia. An Associated Press reporter in Aceh province saw bodies stuck in trees and others littering beaches. Dozens of bloated bodies littered the streets of the provincial capital of Banda Aceh, while on city outskirts some 500 bodies lay under plastic tents, rotting in the tropical heat.

Victims, many of whom had spent the night sleeping outside on open ground, complained that little or no aid had reached them by Monday. In the provincial town of Lhokseumawe, Dr. Tambah Taibsyah said the hospital treating some 100 seriously injured patients was close to running out of medicine.

In Sri Lanka, where more than 10,000 people were reported killed, extensive damage will complicate efforts to rescue survivors or deliver aid, the country’s ambassador to the United States said. “It’s going to take time to figure out access to these areas that have been impacted,” Devinda R. Subasinghe said Monday in an interview on CNN.

The waves’ fearsome power was evident in the fishing community of Trincomalee, 140 miles northeast of the capital Colombo, where they tossed boats up to 300 yards inland, spearing some into buildings.

In India, independent reports put the death toll along the southern coast far higher than the officially confirmed total of about 2,300. Press Trust of India news agency put the the overall death toll in India as high as 6,000.

Business

Analysts divided on Wall Street rally

NEW YORK (AP)—Wall Street is going into the last week of 2004 with all three major indexes above or at their multiyear highs. Immense investor confidence has buoyed stocks through bad news, and good news is greeted with enthusiasm. Still, as 2005 and fourth-quarter earnings approach—and with stocks becoming ever more costly—Wall Street's impressive rally might become harder to sustain.

When will the ride end? Analysts are divided, with some saying the rally could continue through at least the end of the first quarter, while others say the fourth-quarter earnings season, which starts the second week of January, could include enough disappointments to create at least a small selloff.

There is always the chance that world events, such as a terrorist attack, could prematurely end any rally, and problems with the upcoming elections in Iraq could certainly cause stocks to fall. However, the markets have been resilient to geopolitical news in recent months. For example, Tuesday's attack on an American base in Iraq, which killed 22 soldiers and workers, would have caused stocks to drop quickly earlier in the year, but had no effect on the markets last week.

For the week ahead, at least,



New York police officers Puhl, left, and Bulson stand guard in front of the New York Stock Exchange as it sits decorated for the holidays Wednesday, Dec. 22, 2004, in New York.

investors can expect the market to climb, if history is any indication. Analysts say the week between Christmas and New Year's Day has historically been one of the market's best. Since 1972, the Dow has gained an average of 0.99 percent in the five sessions between the two holidays.

Last week, the "Santa Claus" rally delivered strong gains on Wall Street despite mediocre

earnings and economic news, with the Dow Jones industrial average reaching 3 1/2-year highs for three straight sessions. The Standard & Poor's 500 also set new 3 1/2-year highs on Wednesday and Thursday. For the week, the Dow rose 1.66 percent, the S&P gained 1.33 percent, and the Nasdaq composite index climbed 1.19 percent.

ECONOMIC NEWS:

A handful of economic reports will receive more attention in the week ahead due to the dearth of other news.

On Tuesday, the Conference Board will release its consumer confidence index for December. Wall Street is expecting a slight rise to 93.5, compared to the 90.5 reading in November. The index has declined for four straight

months, and November's reading was the lowest since March.

The National Association of Realtors will release its November report on existing home sales on Wednesday. Economists expect home sales of 6.75 million, about the same as October. Last week, however, the Commerce Department said new home sales plunged by 12 percent in November from the previous month, the biggest drop-off since January 1994. If existing home sales fall as well, that could be a cause for concern for many investors—though probably good news for would-be home buyers.

EARNINGS:

No major companies have scheduled earnings announcements in the week ahead, a traditionally slow week for business news. However, investors can expect at least a handful of companies to come out with lower profit forecasts or other bad news. It's customary for companies to make those kind of announcements in the week between holidays, since, they believe, fewer people are paying attention.

EVENTS:

The stock markets, forgoing a New Year's holiday, will be on a standard schedule all week, including Dec. 31. The bond markets will close early for New Year's on Friday.

Taxpayers may be liable for oil cleanup

By DAVID PACE
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—Bonds posted by companies with federal oil and gas leases cover only a small fraction of the projected costs of plugging wells and restoring land once the fuel is extracted, leaving taxpayers with the potential for huge cleanup bills, an Associated Press analysis of federal records shows.

The Bureau of Land Management has collected just \$132 million in bonds from oil and gas companies responsible for more than 100,000 wells on federal lands. The government estimates it costs between \$2,500 and \$75,000 to cap each well and restore the surface area.

In the past five years, the BLM has spent \$2.2 million to clean up 167 wells where operators defaulted on their bonds.

At that average rate of \$13,066 per well, the shortfall between the bonds and the actual cleanup costs could leave taxpayers with as much as a \$1 billion potential liability if companies reneged on their cleanup responsibilities, the AP analysis found.

The Bush administration this fall quietly shelved an eight-year effort to increase the minimum bond requirements for oil and gas drilling on federal lands.

The current rates were set in 1960, and gas and oil companies are the only federal mineral lease holders that aren't required to post full reclamation bonds. Coal and hard rock mineral companies must post bonds equivalent to the estimated cleanup costs.

Bush administration officials say they don't want high bonds to discourage oil and gas exploration on federal lands in the midst of an energy crunch and believe the risks are minimal given that relatively few companies have reneged on cleanup obligations in recent years.

In the past five years, 17 companies defaulted on their cleanup, causing their bonds to be revoked.

"There is a small risk here," said Bob Anderson, the BLM's deputy assistant director for minerals. "And it's a risk that we think is an equitable one."

But others, including landowners struggling to get older, non-producing wells plugged, believe it is unfair.

Dollar near record low against euro

TOKYO (AP)—The dollar was trading near a historic low against the euro in Asia on Monday, after renewing record levels in holiday-thinned European markets last week.

The U.S. dollar has slid against major currencies in recent months because of worries that the massive U.S. budget and current account deficits are unsustainable.

At 10 a.m. in Tokyo, the euro was at US\$1.3522, up from US\$1.3512 in Tokyo on Fri-

day and above the US\$1.3519 where it traded later that day in New York. However, it remained below the record US\$1.3548 where it peaked in extremely light holiday trading Friday, when most European foreign exchange markets were closed.

The 12-nation euro initially fell against the dollar after its 1999 debut, but it has risen more than 60 percent since bottoming out at 82 U.S. cents in October 2000.

Though trading was relatively subdued in Asia, traders in the United States and Europe will return from the Christmas holidays later Monday, in a session that could be volatile.

Most Japanese investors will be on holiday through Jan. 4.

Early Monday, the Bank of Japan quoted the dollar at 103.73 yen, down 0.01 yen from its level late in Tokyo but above the 103.63 yen it traded late in Europe on Friday.

Saudi reserves may top 461 billion barrels

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia (AP)—Saudi Arabia's oil reserves, the world's largest, could increase by almost 77 percent to top 461 billion barrels in a few years, the nation's oil minister said Sunday.

"There are big chances to increase the kingdom's produceable oil reserves by 200 billion barrels," Ali Naimi said in a statement issued after he inaugurated new oil fields in eastern Saudi Arabia. "This will come either through new discoveries or through increasing production from known deposits."

Saudi Arabia says its regis-

tered reserves amount to 261 billion barrels.

Naimi reiterated promises to continue meeting consumer demand for world crude.

"The kingdom is keen to ensure a balance between supply and demand and the stability of the market ... so that producers benefit and consumers do not lose," the official Saudi News Agency quoted him as saying.

The newly inaugurated Qatif Producing Plants, operated by the Saudi national oil giant Aramco, is believed to have a capacity of 800,000 barrels per day. The plants will also provide

370 million standard cubic feet (10 million cubic meters) of associated gas.

The onshore part of the field has the capacity to provide 500,000 daily barrels of Arabian light crude, the statement said.

The new offshore Abu-Sa'fah field contains an estimated 6.1 billion barrels of oil reserves and will produce 300,000 bpd of Arabian medium crude.

Naimi has said the kingdom plans to increase its oil production capacity to 12.5 million bpd from the current 11 million over the next few years. The desert kingdom sits on a quarter of the world's proven oil reserves.

STOCK

ASIAN MARKETS

NIKKEI 225

14,123.12

+112.23

ASX 200

4,123.12

+112.23

HK 50

1,123.12

+112.23

SENSEX

1,123.12

+112.23

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW

10,827.12

+112.23

S&P

1,210.13

+0.68

NASDAQ

2,180.82

+3.08

MONEY MARKET

Australian Dollar	1.2400
British Pound	0.5100
Canadian Dollar	0.6500
Chinese Yuan	0.1500
Euro	0.7100
Japanese Yen	0.0070
Indian Rupee	0.0150
South African Rand	0.0400
Thai Baht	0.0250
US Dollar	1.0000
Yen	0.0070

Asia

World

tribune graduation ad

Overdrive

joeten motors
+2 color

Life & Style

Life & Style

It's your party and he'll crash if he wants to

By JEFF PEARLMAN
NEWSDAY

I loathe the annual office Christmas party. Really, I do.

I attended my first 10 years ago, when I was a pimply faced reporter for a Nashville newspaper called The Tennessean. The gala was held in a ballroom at the swank Loews Vanderbilt Hotel, and deep into the night I shuffled my way from one uninterested co-worker to another. Some were drunk on alcohol, others on boredom. A few

simply stood against the wall, slipping into irreversible comas. Every conversation incorporated one of the following four statements:

"Last year's was much better."

"You have to try the potato puffs."

"Fiona looks fat."

"So ... uhm."

Once, I witnessed my (married, intoxicated) boss kissing a co-worker. Another time, my date for the night left midway through—to attend someone else's office party. Two or three

years ago, I simply decided to retire. No more office Christmas parties for me. I was done.

A few months back, just when I was feeling secure yet again that this would be a potato puff-free holiday season, the assignment came: "Crash as many holiday parties as you can. See what they're all about."

I was angry.

I was furious.

I was dreading the future.

"Wow!" my wife said later that night. "Think of all the free cocktail wieners."



Party one: I am not alone

The first thing one learns in journalism is to act like you belong. When covering a major-league baseball team, greet the star slugger with confidence. When contacting the police chief about a department scandal, have your names and facts at the tip of your tongue. Never slouch, and never let 'em see you sweat. It goes a long way.

It is with this in mind that I approach the lobby of the Bombay Palace, a midtown Manhattan Indian restaurant and, for the next couple of hours, home to my debut as an uninvited Christmas party guest.

I am here for the Time Warner diversity gala—the temporary merging of the company's Hispanic, African-American, Asian and gay and lesbian groups assembled to sip eggnog and gorge on chicken tikka spears.

My first hurdle is the front desk, where a restaurant manager greets customers and roots out trespassers. Pacing outside in the cold Thursday night mist, I ponder opening lines:

"Candygram!"

"I'm gay!"

"Is Jos{inodot} Woo here yet?"

In the end, I simply nod while pointing toward the African-American woman in front of me, an I'm-with-her gesture that—fortunately—she doesn't see. It works. I slip through the door and up the stairs.

The party is every past Christmas shindig I've attended. Lame small talk over dinky appetizers and bottles of Bud Light. But suddenly, out of the yuletide abyss, something stunning occurs.

"Hey, Pearlman!"

It's an old friend and former co-worker, bounding my way with puppy dog eagerness. I'm slightly alarmed but mostly shocked. "Stanley," I say, "I didn't know you're a member of BE(a)T (the African-American group)."

Stanley laughs. "I'm not," he says. "But free eats and free drinks. What's to lose?"

Over the next two hours, I

run into four other acquaintances, who cumulatively have attended a grand total of zero diversity group meetings. When I tell them of my secret agenda, they laugh. We are all playing the same game of Party Crash (with the minor exception that they are, ahem, minorities employed by Time Warner). "Dude, Christmas parties are only about two things," one says. "The free booze and the free booty. Nothing more."

I nod knowingly, a third White Russian tingling my senses. A married man, I happily settle for the booze.

Party two: Logistically speaking

It is 6:30 p.m. on a wet, frigid Monday in Manhattan, and my life stinks. I assumed there'd be complications with this assignment—dress code, technical talk, limited space, Pee-wee Herman-inspired costume themes.

But not once did I consider the goons. No: goons. They're the beefy, snarling, intimidating men who patrol the doors of the Copacabana, and, while I fear not the wrath of your everyday, spindly bouncer, goons are another story. Goons pulverize trespassers like me into mashed tomato, then kick our bloodied corpses to the curb. It is not pretty.

So, as I stand here in the rain, watching one Ann Taylor employee after another flash an official company badge to the goons at the Copa's main entrance, I panic. I pace back and forth. I check the side entrances (all locked). I call my father, who urges me to not get arrested again. Inevitably—with nothing but my health, my job and a stint at Rikers on the line—I approach the goon.

"Sir," I say, "I hate to be a pain, but I just started at Ann Taylor two days ago. I'm a new employee." With this, I flash my Food Emporium bonus card. There is no logical reason for doing so. The card has long since expired.

"Lemme go get somebody,"

goon barks. "Stay here."

Moments later, I am greeted by a middle-aged woman in a black dress. She oozes importance. "Sir," she asks, "May I know what department you work in?"

My mind goes blank. I stare and stare, as phrases like "big mailroom" and "Chaka Kahn" and "seriously, somewhere really important" dart through my mind. Finally, I blurt out an incredibly asinine word that makes no sense on any level.

"Logistics."

For what feels like two hours, the woman looks me over, certainly ready to call in the goons for my required beating.

"OK, great!" she says. "Welcome to the company!"

The party is an ode to the freedom of knowing no one. When food is served, I elbow my way to the front of the buffet line, never thinking twice about the six rolls, five slabs of roast beef and Rushmore-size mound of potatoes on my plate. Otherwise, I'm sorta bored. If you live for 24-year-old women in Ann Taylor clothing bobbing awkwardly to "Turn the Beat Around," this is your place. If not, zzzzzzzzzzzzz.

Party three: Michael Berg

Never in my life have I experienced anything quite like the Marcum & Kleigman LLP Christmas party, which is to understated humility what Pantera was to elevator music. Held at the Old Westbury Golf & Country Club on a Tuesday night, the \$250,000 gala offers everything from a sushi bar to a pasta bar to a dessert bonanza.

As I pull up to the club, a parking attendant asks if I'm here for "M&K." Once again, I panic. M&K...M&K. Milk & Kookies? Mike & Ken? Mildew & Korn? Then it hits me. "Yeah ... yeah!" I yelp. "M&K! I'm down with the M&K."

Yet upon entering, I realize there's trouble. Along with the fact that I know absolutely nothing about the modern world of

See IT'S YOUR on Page 21

death announcement

‘Fockers’ sets Christmas day record

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Millions of Americans went shopping for comedy this weekend, giving the star-studded “Meet the Fockers” the record for the best single Christmas Day box office take. The sequel, reuniting Ben Stiller and Robert De Niro and adding Dustin Hoffman and Barbra Streisand as Stiller’s parents, earned \$44.7 million over the holiday weekend according to studio estimates.

While not a weekend record, the film did set a record for Christmas Day, earning \$19.1 million. The previous record was set last year when “The Lord of the Rings: Return of

the King” earned \$14 million on Christmas Day.

Still, the performance of “Meet the Fockers” was impressive when measured against the overall weekend box office, which was down 26.5 percent from last year.

“When Christmas falls on a weekend, it’s bad for business,” said Paul Dergarabedian, president of box-office tracker Exhibitor Relations.

This weekend’s top 12 films grossed an estimated \$121.9 million, compared to last year’s \$165.8 million when Christmas fell on a Thursday. Last year’s figure was skewed a bit by the

third “Lord of the Rings” movie, which earned \$50.6 million in its second weekend.

“Meet the Fockers” knocked last week’s top film—“Lemony Snicket’s A Series of Unfortunate Events”—to third place, with \$12.5 million. Second place was taken by the live-action version of “Fat Albert,” which debuted Saturday with a two-day total of \$12.7 million, according to studio estimates.

Final figures were to be released Monday.

“Meet the Fockers” succeeded in part because of an aggressive ad campaign, including the release of the DVD of the original “Meet

the Parents” as well as the return of Streisand to the big screen after an eight-year absence.

It also captured the clash between families, which resonates at the holidays.

“It’s a clash of cultures,” said Marc Shmuger, vice chairman of Universal Pictures. “It’s about the coming together of completely different families, but that’s exactly what the world is going through right now.”

“Meet the Fockers” opened Wednesday, bringing its five-day total to \$68.5 million.

“The Aviator,” the epic tale of billionaire Howard Hughes, did well enough in limited release

to take fourth place with \$9.4 million. The movie, directed by Martin Scorsese and starring Leonardo DiCaprio, expanded from 40 theaters to 1,796 on Christmas Day.

The small budget horror flick “Darkness” went against the slew of family films on the market now and attracted \$6.4 million in its opening weekend.

The movie opened Saturday.

The lavish Andrew Lloyd Weber musical “The Phantom of the Opera” also debuted in

limited release, bringing in \$4.2 million from 622 theaters. It debuted Wednesday, bringing its five-day total to \$6.5 million.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at North American theaters, according to Exhibitor Relations Co. Inc.

1. **“Meet the Fockers,”** \$44.7 million
2. **“Fat Albert,”** 12.7 million.
3. **“Lemony Snicket’s A Series of Unfortunate Events,”** \$12.5 million
4. **“The Aviator,”** \$9.4 million.
5. **“Ocean’s Twelve,”** \$8.6 million.
6. **“Darkness,”** \$6.4 million.
7. **“The Polar Express,”** \$6.3 million.
8. **“Spanglish,”** \$5 million
9. **“The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou,”** \$4.8 million.
10. **“Andrew Lloyd Weber’s The Phantom of the Opera,”** \$4.2 million.

IT’S YOUR...

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accounting, I also lack the one item every guest possesses: a white name tag.

Calmly, I stroll over to a table covered in labels, do a nonchalant look-around, then—swipe!—pick up one and attach it to the lapel of my blue suit. It belongs to a man named Michael Berg of Datatel Group who, I genuinely believe, wants me to be happy and enjoy the evening on his behalf.

Cloaked by anonymity, I glide across the ballroom, from sushi to sliced turkey to the three scoops of gelato that, surely, Michael Berg would have absolutely loved.

It is in the midst of cutting my second piece of chocolate cake that I make small talk with Robert Lancer, the baby-faced president of Technobius, a company that, I am surprised to learn, exists. “How’s it going?” I ask, uninterested in the answer.

“Great,” says Robert. “What type of business are you in?”

For the record, I do not believe in flat-out lying. I believe in survival. “Oh,” I say. “I do Web design. Like, Web sites and design stuff like that.”

There is a pause, followed by a wide smile.

“Wow!” Robert says. “You’re the only other person I’ve met here who does Web design! I do Web design, too!”

“Oh,” I say. “Great.”

Robert continues. “So what type of software do you guys use? I use mainly willierandolphsspleen.”

“Oh,” I reply. “That’s fascinating—me too! Oops, gotta go. Marquette’s playing South Dakota State in college hoops tonight.”

Michael Berg escapes. With two halvahs in his pocket.

Parties four, five, six: A cigarette-smoking logo designer

Popularity has never been an ally of mine. In elementary school, I was often the last picked in all things athletic and academic. In high school, I only heard about parties the day after they occurred. So it is with a bit of pride that I prepare this Thursday night to attend (count ‘em) three

Christmas shindigs. Have I been invited to any of them? No. But such is not the point.

My first stop is at a company called Tipping Sprung, which—thanks to a quick Google search—I learn specializes in branding and licensing. The party is on the 14th floor of a Lower West Side building, and when I arrive for a night of “reindeer games and karaoke” (so says the invitation), I am dismayed to learn there are no more than 20 people in attendance and that the location is Tipping Point’s actual office space. This, I think to myself, will be a toughie.

I immediately run into Nick, an enthusiastic sort who hands me a folder filled with information on the company’s joint venture with Dr. Spock. I am excited to hear that “Star Trek” is regaining its oomph and tell Nick so much. He looks at me blankly (I later learn this Dr. Spock is the late child-care guru), then asks what, exactly, I’m doing here. My answer makes no sense.

“Well,” I say, “I do logo design for Nike, and since you guys deal with logos, and my friend is supposed to be coming who works with you, I thought, uh, yeah.”

Eyes glazed, Nick nods and walks away. “Have fun,” he says.

Throughout the night, Tipping Sprung employees repeatedly ask me to explain who I am. My answers vary (Nike logo designer, Ann Taylor logistical scientist, Mike Berg from Datatel), until I bump into Shannon Phipps, a sweet-talking 25-year-old Atlanta native who was hired to clear glasses and remove plates. Phipps has the sort of face you trust, and as I whisper my assignment to her, she giggles wickedly. “That’s just too funny,” she says. “You name it, I’ll help.”

My mission, I tell her, is simple: To karaoke like nobody at Tipping Sprung has karaoked before. (And I’m not even drunk.)

As I stand here in a darkened office, among the desks and file cabinets and newfound co-workers, I turn Elvis Presley’s “Love Me Tender” into an endorsement for deafness. Midway through the tune, I wrap my arm around Nick and coerce him into a duet. Our voices

meld into one unharmonious train wreck, and I laugh like a schoolgirl as I read the lips of my fellow partygoers.

Who is that idiot?

When the song ends, I bow, yell, “Good night, Cleveland!” jump into a cab and bolt to the Hearst Magazines party at Tavern on the Green in Central Park. Sadly, I arrive at 9:23 p.m., and the event ends in seven minutes. I charge through the front door, past two security guards and plop myself in the middle of the dance floor. As soon as I start my groove thing, the music stops. The band is done.

I, however, am not. My final challenge of the night is one of the greatest of all time: breaking into the MTV Christmas party at the Hammerstein Ballroom. According to my brother-in-law, an MTV employee and holder of an elusive party invitation, nobody—“absolutely nobody”—gets in without an invite, an MTV corporate ID and a driver’s license. It’s the party equivalent of the U.S. Mint. Or, as he tells me via e-mail, “Not even worth trying.”

With this in mind, I spend much of the day plotting. First, I stop by the MTV Store in Times Square, hoping to snag someone’s business card to use as my own. When that falls through, I visit Electric Concept, a store on 45th Street and Eighth Avenue that peddles “real” ID cards. My brilliant idea is to place my photo on an ID featuring the name “Brian Graden,” MTV’s president of programming. But at \$40 for a lousy plastic rectangle, I pass. In a final stroke of genius, I consider paying a bunch of teenagers \$5 a pop to scream my name and ask for autographs as I approach the front of the Hammerstein. Hell, would MTV turn away a celebrity?

In the end, I show up and hope for the best. It looks bleak. There’s a security guard at every door, and a rope that separates the in crowd from the outtie dregs (like me). Then, I have a flash of inspiration. In front of the Hammerstein is a fenced-in smoking section. In one small area, however, a crack exists in the barrier. With nobody paying much attention, I slide between the fence and casually cruise into the center of the smokers.

Now, in my life I have prob-

ably smoked five cigarettes—none in the past 10 years. I bum a Kool off a drunk man and convey to him my plight.

Nearby, a 30-something woman named Jen overhears and offers a possible, though seemingly far-fetched, solution. To come and go from the ballroom to the smoking section, all entrants are stamped with a small red ink blot on their hand that reads PUFF. Jen volunteers to lick the back of her hand and rub her PUFF stamp against my hand. She does it once. Then again. And again. The stamp barely transfers—a minuscule red smudge, nothing more. The back of my hand is coated with Jen spit.

Finally, she stops. “Just follow me,” Jen says, “and don’t look up.” As she approaches the smoking section bouncer, Jen flicks her hand up so he can see her stamp. I do the same—quickly, yet nonchalantly—and ... BAM! It happens. I’m in. I’m in! The party that couldn’t be cracked has been cracked.

The ballroom is a living, breathing, pulsating ode to sex; South Beach, sans the beach. People are bumping and grinding and sweating all over the dance floor, with one dress more revealing than the last. There is no room to inhale air, let alone walk freely.

With Justin Timberlake’s “Rock Your Body” blaring from above, I recall the one thing I need to accomplish. For 25 minutes I search high and low, left and right for the man who said I would never make it here. And there he is—standing by the bar, his back to me. I tap my brother-in-law on the shoulder, and he turns around. His expression is one I will never forget. Stunned. Dazzled. Amazed.

“Man,” he says, “absolutely fantastic.”

Upon leaving, I ask an MTV security guard to rate the difficulty of getting into the party.

“On a scale of one to 10 ... how hard?”

“Out of one to 10?” she says. A long pause. “Impossible.”

With this, I nod, smile and bound off into the night. Ten years after my first office Christmas party, my holiday spirits have been reinvigorated. Break out the potato puffs. I love these things.

WALLACE

Modesty must take back seat when life or death is involved

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: In reply to the letter from "Offended in the South," regarding hospital gowns, I understand a person's need for modesty. However, I am a health-care provider, and I see the other side of the picture. As a paramedic, we are constantly disrobing patients (including cutting clothing off) to gain access to areas that need examination and treatment. Hospital gowns give us access to IV lines, EKG monitoring, and defibrillation and other medical equipment.



Dear Abby

I am always conscious of my patients' need for privacy and re-cover them after I have examined them. Hospitals do provide robes for patients that will cover their backsides. I encourage all hospital patients to request a robe besides the hospital gown they receive upon admission.

KHRYSTEN, PORT EDWARDS, WIS.

DEAR KHRYSTEN: I'm sure many readers will be interested to know that such garments are available upon request. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: Some years back, I was in a hospital that offered a unique hospital gown. It was extremely large and had three sleeves. The patient put the left sleeve over the left arm, the right sleeve over the right arm, and then the gown was passed around the back, and the third sleeve placed over the left arm again. I remember my entire body was covered and I was very comfortable. I wish I could recall the name of that hospital.

H.E. IN FLORIDA

DEAR H.E.: It's nice to know that such a garment exists, but how practical can it be for examinations or other emergency procedures?

DEAR ABBY: Five years ago, I had the same complaint as "Offended." I am 6 feet tall and weigh 225 pounds. For years I complained to the doctors about the fact that the gowns were so short. Finally, I went to the fabric store and bought two yards of fabric and a pattern for a wrap-around sundress. The total cost was \$12.95. I made it long—about 8 inches below my knee—and carried it with me in a tote bag.

MARCE IN HOUSTON

DEAR MARCE: That's a practical solution for a person who's handy with a needle—the sewing kind, that is.

DEAR ABBY: Here's what I did the last time I went for my annual checkup. I took along a clean cotton housecoat (duster) and, instead of waiting around in the chilly exam room in a mini-paper outfit, I was warm and cozy in my own garment. My doctor thought it was a great idea.

COZY IN SCOTTSDALE

DEAR COZY: I think it's a great idea, too.

DEAR ABBY: This may come as a shock, but patients in the hospital are there because they are SICK. Doctors, nurses and other medical staff need access to their sick bodies. Sometimes quick access can make the difference between life and death. So, while the patient's dignity is a priority for health-care professionals, of even greater importance is the patient's life or limb.

I am a nurse on a medical-surgical floor at our local hospital. We are careful to offer patients two gowns—one over the front, and the other reversed as a robe over the back. If they are bed-bound, we have no shortage of blankets to protect their modesty. Being Southern myself—like "Offended," the author of that letter—I know how we love to blow things out of proportion, and frankly, "Offended" has done just that with this gown thing. My advice to her: Build a bridge, sweetie, and get over it!

RN IN TYLERTOWN, MISS.

DEAR RN: Not so fast. While I agree in principle with what you're saying, our population is becoming increasingly diverse, and it is important that the medical community adopt culturally appropriate methods to accommodate those whose cultures are averse to "the wide-open spaces."

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Drug firms issue memos on Michael Moore

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Some pharmaceutical companies are telling their employees to look out for the scruffy guy in the baseball cap.

The Los Angeles Times reported Wednesday that at least six drug companies have released internal communications telling employees to be wary of filmmaker Michael Moore.

Moore's targets have included General Motors ("Roger & Me"), the gun lobby (the Oscar-winning "Bowling for Columbine") and President Bush ("Fahrenheit 9/11").

Moore, normally seen sporting a beard and a ball cap, has now set his sights on the health care industry, including insurance companies, HMOs, the Food and Drug Administration and drug companies.

"We ran a story in our online newspaper saying Moore is embarking on a documentary and if you see a scruffy guy in a baseball cap, you'll know who it is," said Stephen Lederer, a spokesman for Pfizer Global Research and Development.



Michael Moore, writer and director of the movie "Fahrenheit 9/11," poses before a news interview, in this July 6, 2004 file photo in New York.

In September and October, Wyeth, AstraZeneca and Glaxo-SmithKline, the second-largest in retail sales, sent out Moore

alerts, instructing employees that questions posed by the media or filmmakers should be handled by corporate communications.

Heavyweights Sanofi-Aventis Pharmaceuticals and Synthelabo sent similar memos before their recent merger.

Actress packs on pounds for 'Spanglish'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Renee Zellweger isn't the only actress packing on the pounds for plum roles these days. Sarah Steele, the 16-year-old actress who plays the overweight daughter of Adam Sandler and Tea Leoni in the comedy-drama "Spang-

lish," had to gain between 15 and 17 pounds for the role.

"And then I had my fat suit. It was cotton and spandex. It was pretty uncomfortable," the 5-foot-tall Steele told the Los Angeles Times for Sunday's editions.

Steele normally fluctuates

between a size 1 and 2. She said she did not use a special diet to gain the weight because the food on the set was so good.

"I was the only actress who could eat it," she said.

Steele, a junior at a private Philadelphia high school, said playing

the role of Bernice gave her an opportunity to explore teenage obesity for audiences who usually don't see it in movies.

Zellweger gained weight to play the British heroine in "Bridget Jones' Diary" and again for "Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason."

Mayer barred from school ceremony

FAIRFIELD, Conn. (AP)—Grammy Award-winner John Mayer returned to his alma mater to be inducted into its Hall of Fame - and wound up in the headmaster's office.

The 27-year-old guitarist and singer, a 1995 graduate of Fairfield Warde High School, decided to attend the induction ceremony but was barred because of what school officials said were security concerns. They said they had not expected the pop star to attend.

"We were not ready for John Mayer," said Jim Conley, chairman of the school's Hall of Fame committee.

Mayer said he was taken to the headmaster's office, where officials stalled him until the ceremony was under way and then walked him to his car.

"It was hurtful," he said Thursday.

Headmaster James Coyne said he explained to Mayer that he was "concerned for his welfare and



John Mayer is shown at Irving Plaza in New York on Feb. 22, 2002.

the welfare of the students."

"I'm sorry he felt that way," Coyne said, adding that the star wasn't escorted from the premises. "We accompanied him to his car."

Mayer said he initially was not able to attend the ceremony, but changed his mind this week.

He said he intended to donate a guitar he used on tour.

As he approached James Blake, a professional tennis player who also was inducted with golfer J.J. Henry, a former teacher took Mayer by the arm and led him into Coyne's office, Mayer said.

US actor released from Pakistan prison

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Actor Erik Anthony Aude, who was freed earlier this week after serving two years in a Pakistani prison, missed a scheduled flight to Los Angeles International Airport Christmas day and was not expected to rejoin his family here until Sunday, a spokesman said.

Aude's flight from Pakistan arrived late Saturday night, and

the Lancaster native missed a connecting flight in Chicago that was scheduled to land in Los Angeles shortly after 7 p.m., said Richard Murphy, the actor's talent manager.

Despite holiday airport delays that stranded thousands of travelers across the country, Aude was able to book passage on another flight scheduled to depart

from Chicago Sunday morning. The actor was expected to arrive in Los Angeles Sunday afternoon, Murphy said.

Aude, who had minor roles in the television show, "Reba" and the hit film "Dude, Where's My Car?" was freed Thursday from Ideal jail in Rawalpindi, a city near Islamabad, Pakistan's capital.

Lombard of 'CSI' balked at morgue visit

RADNOR, Pa. (AP)—When Louise Lombard landed a role as the new crime-scene investigator on "CSI," a producer suggested she prepare by visiting a morgue.

"I turned to her and said, 'That's where the acting comes in,'" Lombard said. "There's no way I'm going to see a corpse just in the name of research. I'm dedicated, but not THAT dedicated."

Lombard became a household name in the United Kingdom on the BBC series "The House of Elliott." She had a costarring role in the movie "Hidalgo."

On "CSI" Lombard plays a crime scene investigator demoted to work on the graveyard shift with star William Petersen.

"She's not a scientist by instinct," Lombard, 34, told TV Guide for its Dec. 26 issue. "She's a cop. Her interest is in justice."

Still, Lombard hasn't been able to avoid the grimier tasks of her pseudo-job. In her first scene she inspects a pool of vomit, and it didn't get any better.

"The next shot was me putting my hand down a toilet," she said. "I've waited my whole career to do that."

Pastimes





TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
New York	90	53	.629	-
Boston	86	56	.606	31/2
Baltimore	65	76	.461	24
Tampa Bay	61	80	.433	28
Toronto	59	84	.413	31

Central Division

Minnesota	82	60	.577	-
Chicago	72	70	.507	10
Cleveland	70	73	.490	121/2
Detroit	64	77	.454	171/2
Kansas City	51	91	.359	31

West Division

Oakland	83	59	.585	-
Anaheim	81	61	.570	2
Texas	78	64	.549	5
Seattle	53	89	.373	30

Yesterday's Games

Minnesota 8, Detroit 5
N.Y. Yankees 9, Baltimore 7
Texas 7, Toronto 6
Tampa Bay 7, Kansas City 2
Seattle 2, Boston 0
Anaheim 11, Chicago White Sox 0
Oakland 1, Cleveland 0

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

Atlanta	84	58	.592	-
Florida	74	65	.532	81/2
Philadelphia	74	69	.517	101/2
New York	61	81	.430	23
Montreal	59	83	.415	25

Central Division

St. Louis	94	48	.662	-
Chicago	76	64	.543	17
Houston	78	66	.542	17
Pittsburgh	66	77	.462	281/2
Cincinnati	65	77	.458	29
Milwaukee	62	79	.440	311/2

West Division

Los Angeles	83	59	.585	-
San Francisco	79	65	.549	5
San Diego	76	67	.531	71/2
Colorado	62	80	.437	21
Arizona	43	100	.301	401/2

Yesterday's Games

Atlanta 9, Montreal 8, 12 innings
Philadelphia 4, N.Y. Mets 2
Milwaukee 11, Cincinnati 0
Florida 11, Chicago Cubs 1
San Diego 15, Colorado 2
St. Louis 7, Los Angeles 6
San Francisco 5, Arizona 2
Houston 5, Pittsburgh 4, 10 innings

NFL STANDINGS

AFC East

	W	L	T	Pct.
N.Y. Jets	1	0	0	1.000
New England	1	0	0	1.000
Buffalo	0	1	0	.000
Miami	0	1	0	.000

North

Cleveland	1	0	0	1.000
Pittsburgh	1	0	0	1.000
Baltimore	0	1	0	.000
Cincinnati	0	1	0	.000

South

Jacksonville	1	0	0	1.000
Tennessee	1	0	0	1.000
Houston	0	1	0	.000
Indianapolis	0	1	0	.000

West

Denver	1	0	0	1.000
San Diego	1	0	0	1.000
Kansas City	0	1	0	.000
Oakland	0	1	0	.000

NFC East

Philadelphia	1	0	0	1.000
Washington	1	0	0	1.000
Dallas	0	1	0	.000
N.Y. Giants	0	1	0	.000

North

Detroit	1	0	0	1.000
Minnesota	1	0	0	1.000
Green Bay	0	0	0	.000
Chicago	0	1	0	.000

South

Atlanta	1	0	0	1.000
Carolina	0	0	0	.000
New Orleans	0	1	0	.000
Tampa Bay	0	1	0	.000

West

Seattle	1	0	0	1.000
St. Louis	1	0	0	1.000
Arizona	0	1	0	.000
San Francisco	0	1	0	.000

Yesterday's Games

Detroit 20, Chicago 16
N.Y. Jets 31, Cincinnati 24
Pittsburgh 24, Oakland 21
San Diego 27, Houston 20
St. Louis 17, Arizona 10
Washington 16, Tampa Bay 10
Seattle 21, New Orleans 7
Jacksonville 13, Buffalo 10
Cleveland 20, Baltimore 3
Atlanta 21, San Francisco 19
Minnesota 35, Dallas 17
Philadelphia 31, N.Y. Giants 17
Denver 34, Kansas City 24

BELL CANADIAN OPEN SCORES

Final Round

(x-Won on third playoff hole)

x-Vijay Singh	68-66-72-69	275
Mike Weir	68-65-70-72	275
Joe Ogilvie	70-69-69-69	277
Justin Rose	70-70-75-63	278
Tom Lehman	74-70-70-64	278
Hunter Mahan	72-69-69-68	278
Stewart Cink	72-68-69-69	278
Robert Damron	72-71-70-66	279
Mark Hensby	70-69-70-71	280
Jesper Parnevik	69-66-71-74	280
Billy Andrade	67-75-71-68	281
David Sutherland	69-72-68-72	281
D.J. Brigman	67-74-67-73	281
Pat Perez	68-68-78-68	282

David Branshaw

Dean Wilson	71-65-75-71	282
Steve Lowery	70-70-69-72	282
Cliff Kresge	70-69-70-73	282
Jose Coceres	69-70-67-76	282
Arjun Atwal	72-70-74-67	283
Kenny Perry	71-67-75-70	283
Glen Day	71-67-74-71	283
Bill Haas	70-69-70-74	283
Casey Wittenberg	71-71-67-74	283
Chris DiMarco	73-72-71-68	284
Craig Perks	69-71-73-71	284
Bob Tway	70-72-75-68	285
Roland Thatcher	74-71-70-70	285
Corey Pavin	72-72-71-70	285
Bill Glasson	73-70-72-70	285
Joey Sindelar	72-70-73-70	285
Brett Quigley	66-73-74-72	285
Chad Campbell	69-71-73-72	285
David Peoples	73-68-72-72	285
Craig Barlow	69-70-73-73	285
Dudley Hart	67-69-75-74	285
David Edwards	72-73-73-68	286
Richard S. Johnson	72-69-74-71	286
Roger Tambellini	73-70-71-72	286
David Frost	71-71-69-75	286
Jason Bohn	73-71-71-72	287
Davis Love III	73-70-72-72	287
Greg Chalmers	72-73-68-74	287
Tommy Tolles	71-72-70-74	287
Esteban Toledo	72-70-78-68	288
Jonathan Byrd	76-68-72-72	288
Jim Rutledge	72-70-69-77	288
Mark Brooks	74-71-75-69	289
Fred Funk	69-73-76-71	289
Mark Wilson	74-70-72-73	289
Tim Petrovic	74-70-71-74	289
Steve Flesch	72-70-73-74	289
David Duval	73-71-75-71	290
Omar Uresti	71-72-76-71	290
Todd Fischer	74-70-74-72	290
Tag Ridings	71-71-75-73	290
Phil Mickelson	68-76-72-74	290
Jim McGovern	75-69-79-68	291
Billy Mayfair	71-72-76-72	291
Neal Lancaster	70-74-72-75	291
Garrett Willis	71-70-75-75	291
Tom Carter	71-74-75-72	292
Dennis Paulson	72-71-76-73	292
Brian Kortan	69-72-75-76	292
Paul Azinger	71-74-70-77	292
Aaron Barber	72-68-74-78	292
	72-73-75-73	293

Jim Carter

Danny Briggs	72-69-78-74	293
Justin Leonard	69-73-77-74	293
Dicky Pride	76-66-77-74	293
Grant Waite	72-72-77-73	294
Larry Mize	75-70-73-76	294
David Morland IV	76-68-74-76	294
Dirk Ayers	70-73-73-78	294
Kevin Sutherland	72-71-79-73	295
John Rollins	74-71-75-75	295
Andre Stolz	74-71-74-76	295
Chris Couch	71-74-77-74	296
	71-71-79-83	304

SPORTS TRANSACTIONS

MLB

SEATTLE MARINERS-Called up LHP Randy Williams from Tacoma of the PCL.
NEW YORK METS-Placed RHP Matt Ginter on the 60-day DL. Recalled OF Victor Diaz from Norfolk of the IL.
PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES-Activated RHP Kevin Millwood from the 15-day DL.

NFL

ATLANTA FALCONS-Waived S Etric Pruitt. Signed LB Terrence Melton from the practice squad.
BUFFALO BILLS-Reached an injury settlement with QB Travis Brown.
GREEN BAY PACKERS-Signed CB Al Harris to a five-year contract extension. Released TE Steve Bush.
INDIANAPOLIS COLTS-Activated S Bob Sanders. Waived FB Cary Davis. Signed DT Jason Stewart to the practice squad.
MIAMI DOLPHINS-Released RB Fred Russell from the practice squad. Signed RB Leonard Henry to the practice squad.
MINNESOTA VIKINGS-Signed OT Mike Rosenthal to a six-year contract extension.
OAKLAND RAIDERS-Activated CB Charles Woodson. Traded DT Chris Cooper to Dallas for future considerations.
SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS-Waived TE Kevin Ware. Signed FB Matt Stanley from the practice squad.
SEATTLE SEAHAWKS-Activated OT Walter Jones. Signed WR Jerheme Urban to the practice squad. Waived G Jerry Wunsch.

By The Associated Press

Saipan Tribune

Sports

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